

**COLLEGE
BOWLS ISSUE**

THE REAL LOS ANGELES SPORTS STORY

SPORT

JANUARY 1989
\$2.25

**NFL
PLAYOFFS**
**THE BEARS
ARE GROWLING
AGAIN**

**DENNIS
GENTRY
SPARKS
CHICAGO'S
RETURN**

**BASKETBALL'S
TOUGHEST DIVISION:
THE CELTICS AND THE
LAKERS AREN'T IN IT**

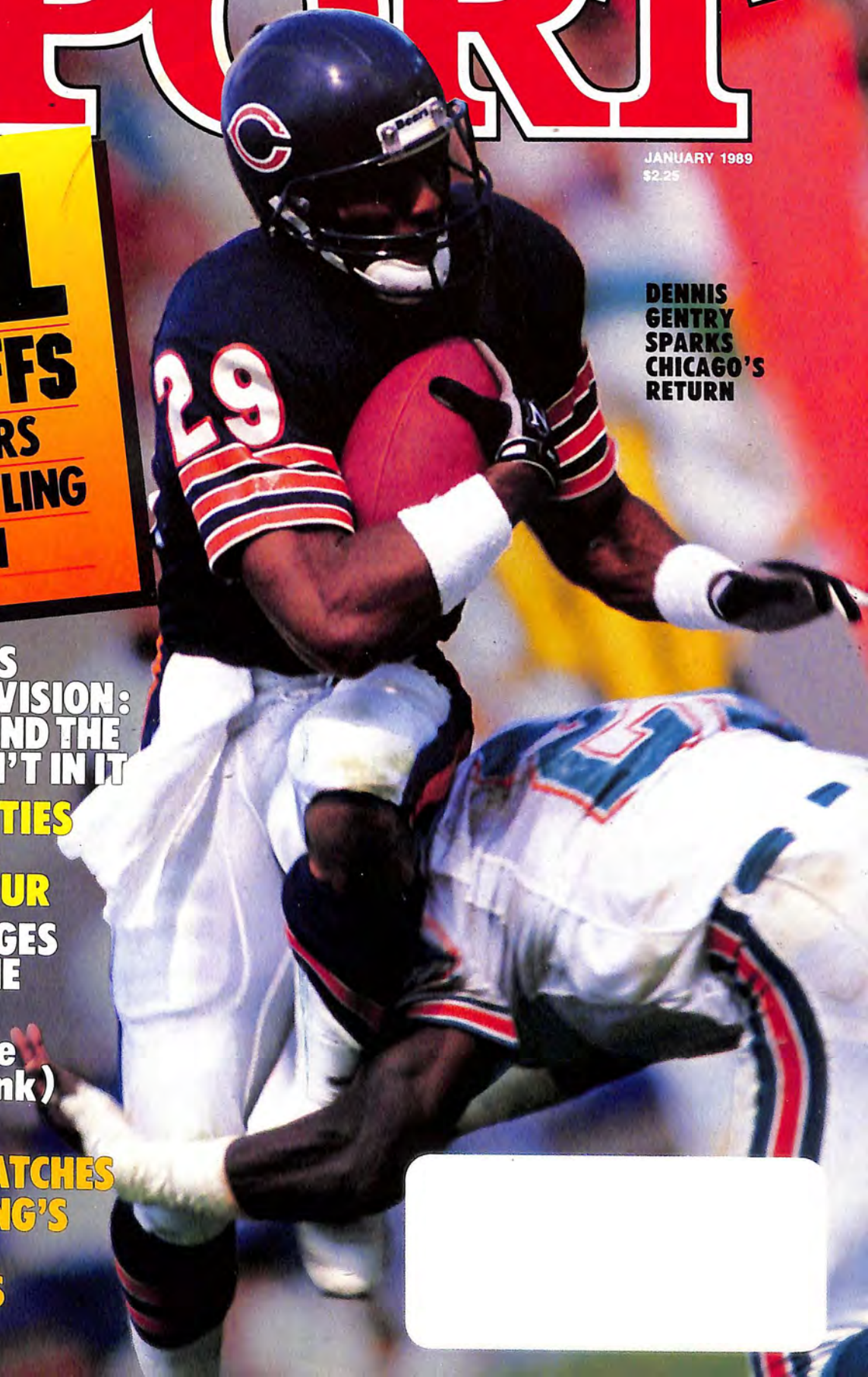
**THE GREAT CITIES
OF AMERICA:
A SPORTS TOUR**

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TURN OUT THE
BEST PROS?**

**(Hint: Not The
Ones You Think)**

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- *THE BIG TEN'S
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SPORT AND THE CITY

As autumn settled in over Los Angeles, the city's spirits were as high as the neighboring San Gabriel Mountains.

The Lakers and Dodgers were the reigning champions of their sports. UCLA and Southern California were ranked 1-3 in the college football polls. The Kings looked like legitimate Stanley Cup contenders. And the Rams and Raiders still had high hopes of making the Super Bowl playoffs. All was right with the world.

The tens of thousands of exuberant celebrants who lined the streets of Broadway in downtown L.A. for the Dodgers' World Series victory celebration symbolized the collective pride of a city's population in the accomplishments of its sports teams. That's what sports is all about.

It happened in Los Angeles, but it could have happened in any American city. In fact, similar celebrations *have* happened in lots of cities across the continent in recent years—New York, Minneapolis, Washington, Chicago, Edmonton, Montreal, Kansas City, Detroit, Boston.

All towns love their sports teams, but no two do it in quite the same way. Following football in Dallas is not the same as being a hockey nut in Hartford. Indianapolis basketball junkies are a different breed than diehard baseball fans in St. Louis.

To borrow a metaphor from Jesse Jackson, the great quilt of North American sports is made of countless patches of all sizes and colors. Those patches are the great cities and small towns, where sports define the local character as much as economy or geography.

One of the joys of producing a magazine like SPORT is that we get to experience the quirks and customs of sports fans from Miami to Seattle, from Quebec to San Diego. We *know* folks root for local high school football teams in small Texas towns as enthusiastically as any Bleacher Bum ever cheered a Cub.

Starting with this issue, we're going to be sharing that experience with SPORT readers in a series of city tours that will take you behind the headlines and into the heart of America's great sports cities. Of course, *every* article we give you takes a special look at the teams and players who make a difference, but from time to time we'll get off the bus and spend some extra time in a town to find out what really makes its sports fans tick.

One thing's for sure: You're going to get a view of these places that you won't read in any other sports publication. Starting with this month's fresh examination of perhaps the most loved *and* hated sports capital in America—Los Angeles—we're going to toss aside common wisdom and instead offer up some uncommon insights about the people involved.

It's people, after all, who define the role of sports in any given town. In that sense, these city tours are emblematic of SPORT's unyielding commitment to sports fans. Without you, there'd be no cities to tour, no sports to write about and no SPORT Magazine to publish. That wouldn't be much of a world, would it?

—The Editors



BRUCE BENNETT

MICHAEL K. NICHOLS/MAGNUM

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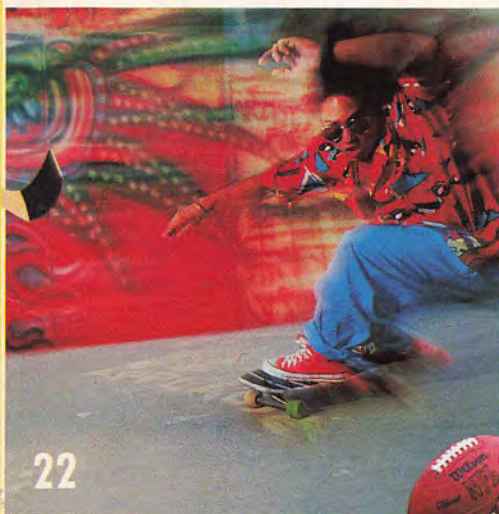
For the SPORT fan who has everything.

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LOS ANGELES

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It's the City of Angels, but the Dodgers own the town and the Lakers own the league. Everything here is imported, from teams to superstars, right down to the United Nations fan base. They all have one thing in common—and you heard it here first: Just win, baby. *By Kelly Garrett*

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You won't find the character of Fenway Park here, but you also won't be subjected to Kingdome-like monstrosities, either. What you get is comfort and good sightlines for watching California girls—and events, if you're interested. *By Ben Pesta*

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One collects coins and Wayne Gretzky, another has Ph.D.s in basketball and bimbos. There's the Cowboy, the clown and the CPA—and Georgia Frontiere as The Madame. *By Scott Ostler*

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A guy named Chick, a Hall of Famer, a rogue scholar with a handlebar mustache and a regular guy named Bob. They're a lot of talk and worth talking about. *By Dan McLean and Kelly Garrett*

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The Raiders got more than a quarterback. They bought the family plan. *By Steve Rosenbloom*

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FAN FARE

AN ADAMS BOMB

How could you pick the Canadiens to finish ahead of the Bruins ("1988-89 NHL Preview," November)? With a new coach, some in-house feuding and a disgruntled Larry Robinson that some reports say wants out of Montreal, the best they will finish is third. The Bruins will eat the rest of the Adams Division up and then force you to eat your prediction, too. By the way, are you kidding that Claude Lemieux is better than last season's 31 goals? Claude Lemieux would be better if he was out in the deep woods of Canada chopping down trees with his hockey stick rather than opposing players!

Paul G. Westlund
Mansfield, Massachusetts

I feel you were wrong in picking the Canadiens to finish ahead of Boston. The Bruins are a younger, better-checking team, and Stephane Richer will have to carry a heavy load for the Canadiens and I think he's too young a player to do that. I also feel that the Canadien goaltenders, Brian Hayward and Patrick Roy, will not have a very good season. Stanley Cup prediction: Boston vs. Detroit.

Jason Kelley
Boston, Massachusetts

What good is the acquisition of Wayne Gretzky by the Kings doing for us hockey fans, and for the brand-new fans, now that ESPN is not showing the NHL games on cable TV? The NHL should make some kind of deal with ESPN, or the networks, to show the pro hockey games in regions not covered by SportsChannel or those other regional TV outlets. By not catering to us hockey fans out here, the NHL is effectively shutting us out of hockey. This intolerable situation should be remedied. Get us back hockey on TV—and soon—somehow.

Marion M. Feeley
Livermore, California

SPORT OF KINGS?

In reference to Kevin Simpson's predictions in the Pacific Division ("1988-89 NBA Preview," November): C'mon, Kevin, wake up! How can you put Golden State, Phoenix and the L.A. Clippers ahead of Sacramento? I don't feel the

Kings will threaten for the NBA championship either, but they will finish at least fourth in the Pacific.

Mike Cagle
Sacramento, California

MORE TRUTH ABOUT #44

In reply to "The Truth About #44" ("Fanfare," November), I think it only fair to add to your reply that Ernie Davis was not only an All-American at Syracuse, but also a Heisman Trophy recipient. He was the first black football player to be awarded this honor. The "Ernie Davis Room" at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse has on display the countless trophies and awards achieved by this great football player.

Thomas W. Mattice
Shortsville, New York

ST. LOSER FOOTBALL

Regarding your article on the Wichita Wings ("Sport Talk," November), you said that St. Louis did not rally around the football Cardinals. That was not true. For four years while the Cards were one of the worst teams in the NFL, they averaged 25,000 to 30,000 people at every game. So don't say that St. Louis didn't rally around that loser of a team.

Pat Barry
St. Louis, Missouri

DOWN ON DIRTY

I found Conrad Dobler's "First and Dirty" (July) to be meaningless, as well as out of the magazine's character. The article disturbed me, primarily because you were more or less congratulating Conrad Dobler on his cheap style of playing football. Furthermore, what significance does this article provide for the reader? It basically describes the ruthless and illegal tactics that Conrad repeatedly displayed on the field. Unfortunately, the editorial did not mention any type of serious disciplinary action taken toward Conrad. What kind of role model does Conrad Dobler set for our young athletes? Obviously not a very good one.

Ron Spiaggia
Livingston, New Jersey

Argue with us, applaud us, advise us. Address your letters to Fanfare, SPORT, 8490 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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Charles M. Stentiford
EDITOR
Lee Kelley
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Donald R. Evans

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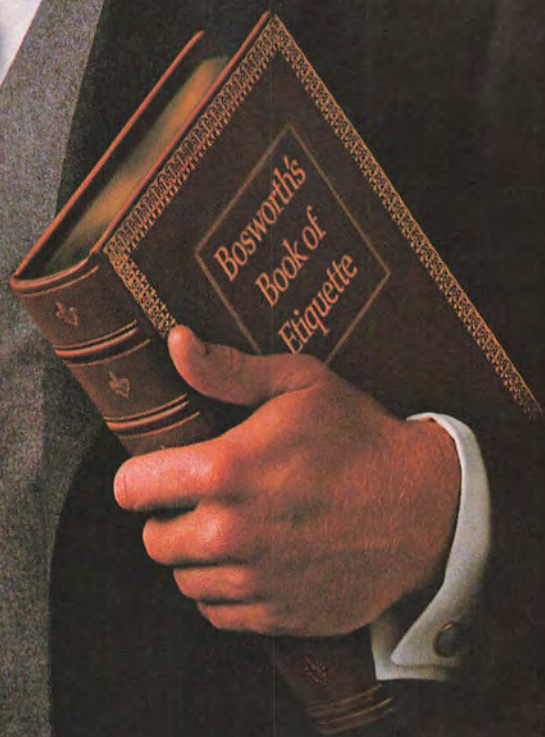
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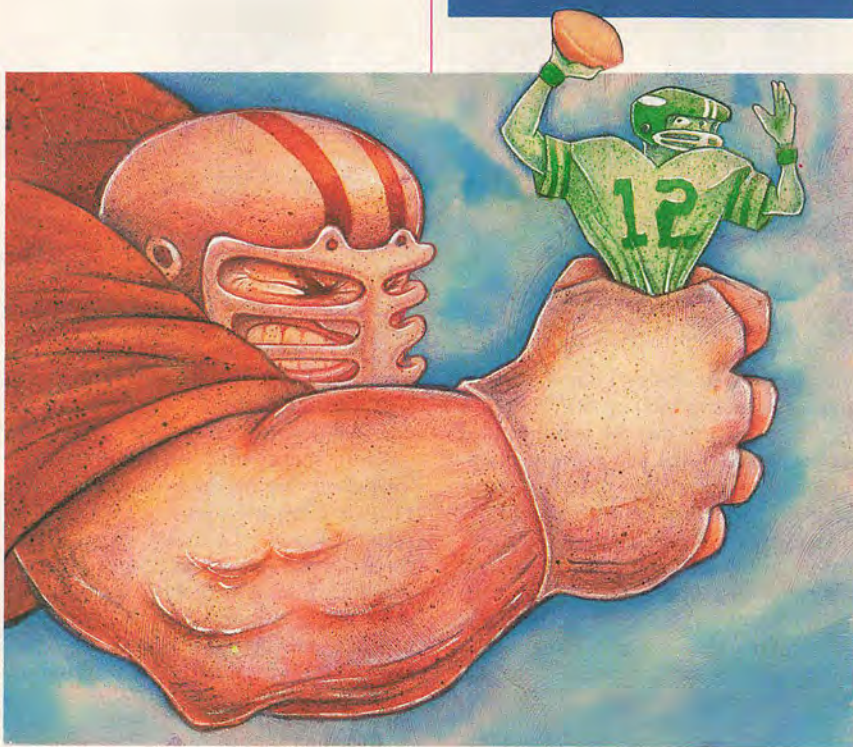


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SPORT TALK



CHRIS ROBERTSON

THE BOYS OF FALL

In a National Football League game in September, referee Pat Haggerty called a roughing-the-passer penalty reportedly because a Kansas City linebacker hit San Diego quarterback Babe Laufenberg too hard. One linebacker visiting Cleveland felt the officials did everything but put Browns quarterback Mike Pagel in a protective cage. Did the ref really take into consideration that Cleveland had already lost Bernie Kosar and Gary Danielson to injury in consecutive games?

Who knows? The NFL has tried to care for its quarterbacks, the league's

most endangered species, and yet every Sunday it seems as though one or two are rushed to emergency wards. Seventeen quarterbacks went down in the first six weeks of the season—seven in the sixth week alone. That's one reason more than 25 percent of NFL rule changes over the last two decades have been made with the players' safety in mind.

What it comes down to is this: All the relatively new rules—grasp-and-control, defenders pulling up, no contact after the throwing motion has been completed—simply need to be properly enforced in order to save careers and, ulti-

mately, the artistic foundation of the NFL product. "We've done just about everything we can," says San Francisco coach Bill Walsh, referring to the legislation of the game. "Some referees are allowing more contact than they should after a quarterback has completed his motion. They shrug and rule it's momentum. But even if a blitzer has run a hundred yards before he gets to the quarterback, it shouldn't make a difference."

The league, which splices together the gory details of every quarterback injury into an annual film for the rules committee, ruled—after further review—that no illegal hits put down eight starters in the first five weeks of the 1988 season.

"In some cases I've read, a player blocked the wrong guy," says Cincinnati owner Paul Brown. "You got to get rid of those stupes, that's what you got to do."

No one wants to put skirts on quarterbacks, yet sometimes it takes an injury before a quarterback realizes he has a right to slide to avoid a tackle after scrambling into the open field.

"We have to go to extremes—change the dynamics of the game—if we want to further protect them," Walsh says, "like limit the number of people who can rush, or say that only certain positions can rush."

Says Brown, "No way can we alter the game where the quarterback is no longer a football player."

Brown does have some advice for other owners who have invested millions in a quarterback: Always draft good linemen, find a coach who can teach them, and use four-wide-receiver sets only in desperation.

—John Czarnecki

THE SPORT MAGAZINE WORLD SERIES MVP; OREL HERSHISER

You can't say Orel Hershiser had the SPORT World Series MVP trophy in his pocket as he shut down the Oakland Athletics twice in the Los Angeles Dodgers' 1988 Series victory. He didn't have a hip pocket free.

In one he kept a scribbled scouting report, a cheat sheet containing the secret formula on how to pitch to such storied A's sluggers as Jose Canseco and Mark McGwire. In the other were Canseco and McGwire themselves, with their col-



MICKEY FLEGER

lective .055 Series batting average (2 for 36 overall, and 0 for 15 against Hershiser).

So the Bulldog will have to put his SPORT MVP trophy on his mantle along with the rest of the treasure trove his remarkable 1988 season and postseason brought him. One reward for his efforts will have to go out in the garage, though. That's the brand new Montero that Mitsubishi presents to the winner of the SPORT Magazine World Series MVP.

—Kelly Garrett

SPORT TALK

ROUGH THE PASSER, GO TO JAIL

Highsticking—or crosschecking or slashing or any other NHL infraction involving physical abuse—has gone from being a minor penalty to a criminal offense. The same could be said of such common NFL penalties as clipping and roughing the passer. Those are the implications of the Dino Ciccarelli decision.

Ciccarelli, the Minnesota right wing, punched Toronto's Luke Richardson—after whacking him over the head with his stick—during a game last January and was convicted and sentenced to a day in jail by Judge Sidney Harris. Ed Greenspan, a Toronto criminal attorney who is handling Ciccarelli's appeal, considers his client's case a dangerous precedent for all sports.

Ciccarelli was brought up on charges because a fan—not Richardson, not the Maple Leafs—filed a complaint, bringing in the new dimension of third-party intervention. "And that's a very dangerous thing," Greenspan says. "The league cannot control that. If that con-



THE TORONTO STAR

viction were to stand, I think that will give any fan the kind of affirmation by the justice system that the system will react even though the league or its players do not. And I think it will be an encouragement for future prosecutions."

Greenspan contends that Ciccarelli's actions were an "anticipated conduct," which means hockey—like any other sport with physical contact—expects such infractions and has set punishment. Also, the players, he says, know this going in. Yet, Greenspan maintains, the Ciccarelli

decision says that hockey and other sports could be told their penalties are criminal offenses.

"For instance," Greenspan says, "roughing the passer produces a penalty. It is expected that that type of conduct will occur because people in the throes of the game will do it. It's an anticipated rule. But if the Ciccarelli case stands, that means a fan could institute criminal proceedings against that person. That's why this case has a high degree of importance." —Steve Rosenbloom

THE PRICE OF PETER'S PRINCIPLES

The commissioner of baseball has taken a powder, and some say it's at a time when the financial stability of the game is perched on a powder keg.

Peter Ueberroth is in the process of transferring power to A. Bartlett Giamatti. Arbitrators Thomas Roberts and George Nicolau are in the process of deciding what monetary penalties will be imposed on Major League Baseball in the wake of their mutual finding that the

owners colluded to shut down the free-agent market in the off-seasons of 1985-86 and '86-87.

The timing of Ueberroth's departure is curious and the opinions of the job he did are mixed. So it is a suitable time to paraphrase the theme of the Republican party and ask the question: Is Major League Baseball better off now than it was when Ueberroth took office?

Ueberroth certainly would say so, and has done just that in recent interviews. The Major League Players Association likely holds a different view, but the union line is not an objective one, either. On the outside looking in, however, is long-time baseball executive E.J. "Buzzie" Bavasi, who is nothing if not candid, and to hell with the party line.

"The fact that we are being accused of collusion is not good for the game," says Bavasi, who retired as California Angels general manager soon after Ueberroth took office. "I don't think that [collusion] is what happened, but it's a blot on the game. It was Peter Ueberroth's job to keep baseball clear of those things. I think the people who operate baseball did not guide it in the right direction. This could be a very serious situation."

Just how serious will be determined when the arbitrators deliver separate rulings on the monetary damages phase of

the Collusion I and Collusion II grievance proceedings in January. By some estimates, Major League Baseball could be socked with penalties ranging as high as \$50 million.

"It will put a definite hardship on the clubs [from an operational standpoint]," Bavasi says. "How are you going to turn a [free-agent] player down if he's better than someone you have?"

But Ueberroth's performance cannot be judged solely on the outcome of the collusion grievances. Baseball has experienced a financial renaissance during his tenure—fragile as it may be—and he appears to have made some progress with his hard-line stance against substance abuse. Ueberroth, whose marketing ability was reflected in both his travel business and wildly successful handling of the 1984 Olympics, let loose his considerable skills on baseball, as evidenced by the massive corporate sponsorship of virtually every promotional aspect of the game.

"Monetarily, the clubs are doing well," Bavasi says. "On the field, artistically, I don't know. I think the one thing that has to be on his conscience is being accused of collusion. The arbitrator is going to have a lot to do with what kind of mark Peter Ueberroth leaves behind." —Peter Schmuck



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SPORT TALK

KEEPING THEIR SOX WITHOUT LOSING THEIR SHIRT

The late Dodgers owner Walter O'Malley might have stolen a healthy slice of Americana and a New York City borough's identity when he moved his baseball team to Los Angeles in 1958. But O'Malley's actions also may have helped save the White Sox for Chicago when the latter club contemplated moving to St. Petersburg, Florida, three decades later.

Like most other native Brooklynites who wore their Dodger emotions on their sleeves, Sox chairman Jerry Reinsdorf will never forget the Dodgers' move. The searing memory of losing an important part of his boyhood gave Reinsdorf pause when he easily could have delivered the Sox to a financially lucrative new home while Illinois and Chicago politicians waffled over a new stadium aid package for the Sox last spring. The \$100 million-plus package was approved by the state legislature at the last second early in the morning of July 2, with the Sox coming "within a very few minutes of moving," said Reinsdorf.

Drawing parallels between the political situations in Brooklyn, 1957, and Chicago, 1987-88, Reinsdorf gave copies of the book, "The Dodgers Move West," to Illinois Gov. James Thompson and the late Chicago Mayor Harold Washington. "And I told them if they would read the book, all they had to do is change the names of the politicians and they would see Chicago."

Reinsdorf, who often has posed with old Brooklyn Dodgers souvenirs, said if he had come from any other place but Brooklyn, "the White Sox probably would have moved to Florida" long before the legislature's last-of-the-ninth actions. "I attribute the decline of Brooklyn to the movement of the Dodgers. Eddie (Einhorn, his Sox co-owner) and I did not want to be a part of contributing to the decline of Chicago."

—George Castle



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THREE'S COMPANY IN NBA—AGAIN

When you have 10 athletes on a basketball court, ranging in size from medium to extra-extra large, putting a third referee on the court presents something of a logistical problem. The NBA's decision to go with three officials this season provides a "third set of eyes" to help spot trouble early and prevent punches later, says Rod Thorn, the NBA's vice-president in charge of operations. But where exactly do you put these eyes and what are they supposed to do?

"The new guy is the slot man," Thorn says. "He works away from the ball, from the foul line to the dotted line [inside the lane]."

The NBA, which scrapped the three-referee system in 1978-79 due mostly to a lack of talent and funds, used to operate with one lead referee and one trail referee. "Usually the trail referee worked to the left of the dribbler," Thorn explains. "Now he can be to the right or left of the dribbler. The lead referee hasn't changed. He stays on the side of the ball in an outside position. So now you have the trail and the lead on the same side with the slot guy looking down the middle."

Thorn says after the league endures a spate of extra whistles early in the season, NBA basketball will be a better game to watch with the additional striped shirt. "The lines will be covered better—out of bounds, the three-point line—and things like three-second violations will be easier to spot," he says. "It used to be that with two referees, one would get blocked out from seeing what was going on, just because of the size of the players. Now it's impossible to block out the views of three officials."

"And also, this is an opportunity for us to get some [more] talented officials into the league [about 18]. Our staff is getting some age on it, and this is a chance to work in some new people."

—Michael Ventre



DENNIS ELLERSON



MARIO ALGAZE

ON DECK LEE TREVINO

Professional golfer... analyst for NBC's coverage of PGA Tour... won U.S. Open in 1968 and 1971... won British Open in 1971 and 1972... won PGA in 1974 and 1984... named Player of the Year in 1971... won 27 PGA Tour events and six majors... won \$3,341,789 in 22 years on the tour, third lifetime behind Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson... PGA Rookie of the Year in 1967... shot a hole-in-one to win \$175,000 in 1987 Skins Game...

AT HIS BEST: In 1971, he became the only golfer to have captured the U.S., British and Canadian opens in one year. In 1980 he won \$385,814. He also won his fifth Vardon Trophy with a scoring average of 69.73, the lowest scoring average on the Tour since Sam Snead's 69.23 in 1950.

CRITICAL MOMENT: Was struck by lightning at Western Open in 1975. He underwent surgery for a herniated disc, which hindered his game considerably.

It wasn't until the 1980s that he returned to his previous form. Next time he's caught in a thunderstorm, he says he'll hold up a 1-iron "because not even He can hit a 1-iron."

THOSE WHO KNOW: "My goal is to be No. 1 until Nicklaus and Trevino join the Senior's Tour," says Chi Chi Rodriguez. "I hope Jack and Lee haven't lined up caddies yet. I might have to caddie for them out here."

"Lee Trevino is going to be a great credit to the Senior's Tour," says Gary Player. "I look forward to him coming out here to help keep the tour as competitive as it is."

"There's no doubt Trevino will be a great asset," says Bob Goalby. "I've worked with him on TV and I know how popular he is. When we would practice together, he'd have the whole gallery with him on the practice tee. If he can do that on the regular tour when he's 49, imagine what he'll do out here."

ETA: December 1, 1989, when he turns 50 and can join the PGA Senior's Tour.



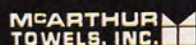
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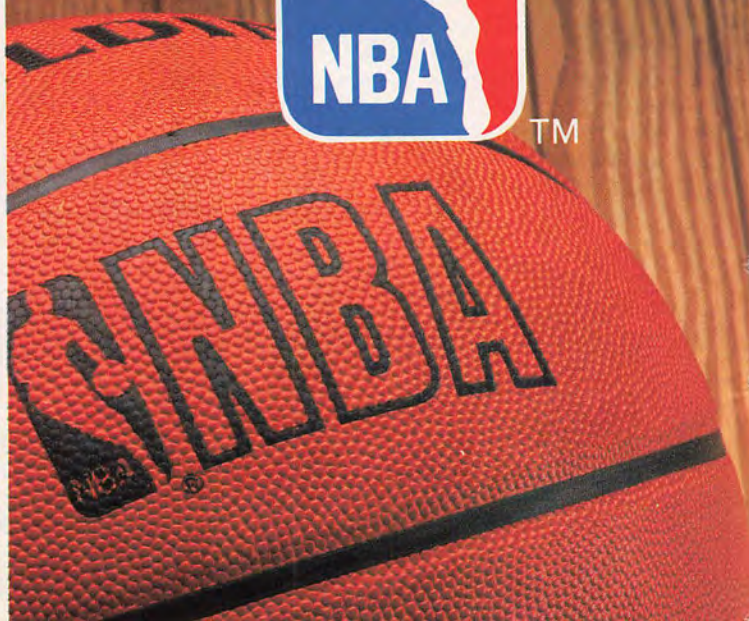
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It was your basic Wednesday afternoon practice at the Los Angeles Raiders' facility in El Segundo, California. The ocean breezes carried some bite. So did Al Davis, who stalked the sidelines, orally manicuring his fingernails. The quarterback was throwing bullets and bombs like it was a Middle East border war. All was right in the world.

"There's such a pressure off us," one Raiders official remarked. "We don't have to go to the john and have the guy at the next urinal say, 'Who's going to be your quarterback?'"

The Raiders believed they got themselves out of the toilet by completing the long-rumored trade for Jay Schroeder—sending Pro Bowl tackle Jim Lachey to Washington—last September. Schroeder sure appeared to be the answer in his first game with the Raiders. After looking like the ghost of Marc Wilson past in the first half of that memorable Monday night game in Denver, Schroeder orchestrated the Raiders' dramatic comeback from a 24-0 halftime deficit for a 30-27 win in overtime.

So, the idea was to sit down with Schroeder and explore the thoughts and emotions of the key guy in one of the rare NFL deals that involved big names. The thing was, the last NFL trade of such magnitude involved Eric Dickerson, with whom Schroeder has a lot in common, as far as being characterized (unfairly or not) as whining and pouting their ways onto another team. Bad attitude, or so the press reports said. This called for a delicate touch. "My wife's

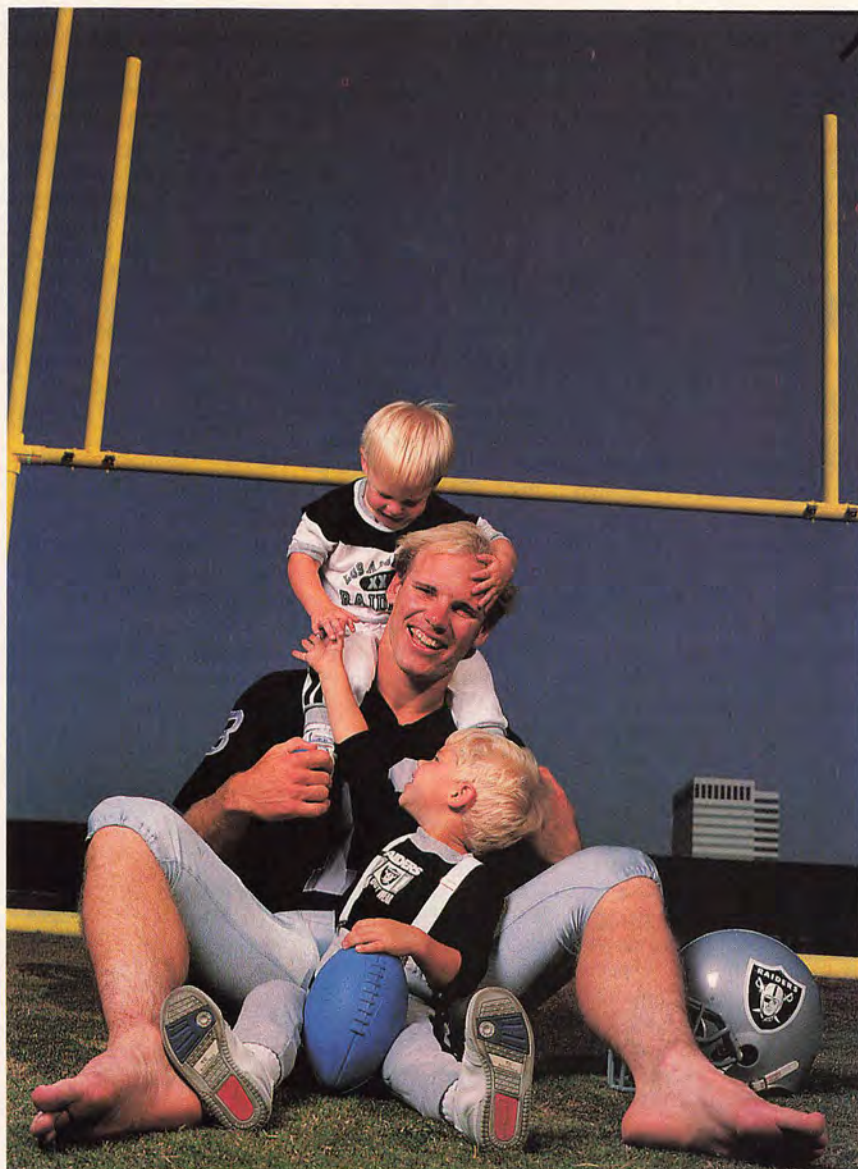
going to be here to pick me up in 15 minutes," Schroeder said, striding out of the locker room clad in a red polo shirt and blue jeans. I told him we'd need more time than that. He said they still had a bunch of things to do in getting settled on the left coast. Uh oh. No time to ease into things. Delicate just got its butt kicked.

All right then, let's bring out the

heavy artillery. Start with the stuff about having a bad attitude. Schroeder responds by saying he's just a competitor and he wasn't getting the chance to compete on the field. Next?

What about your former Redskins teammates saying you were pouting about your situation in training camp? Gossipy press reports, he says. Besides, he says, his teammates understood his

THE RAIDERS
DIDN'T GET
JUST A QB, THEY
BOUGHT THE
FAMILY PLAN
By Steve
Rosenbloom



BEEERS WITH... JAY SCHROEDER

BEERS WITH...

frustration of not being given a chance after Doug Williams led Washington to the Super Bowl victory over Denver. What else?

How about your feud with Redskins coach Joe Gibbs? Just a personality conflict, Schroeder answers. It wasn't anything new, he says, it just exploded when things turned sour. Any more?

Schroeder admits he's a rather unemotional person, aloof even. Here was a chance to let fly with the angst that built up in Washington and he not only coolly throws out answers but he ends up thanking the Redskins for paroling him. Not that he has to say something bad, but what moves this guy, anyway?

Apparently, his wife does. Debbie Schroeder pulls into the parking lot. Jay spots her from the bench we're sitting on outside the Raiders facility and his countenance brightens immediately. Maybe we've got something here. Yo, Debbie, does your husband take his problems home with him?

"He's not Mr. Personality all the time," Debbie says with a smile. "He's really good with the kids (Brian, who's four, and Christopher, who's almost two). Once he gets home . . . our home is our little haven. If he needed to talk, we'd go out to dinner or something."

Suddenly acting like Mr. Personality, Jay says, "There's a side about me that if she asks me something and I (he puts out his palms, meaning stay away) . . ."

"Then I know," Debbie says, finishing her husband's thought. "I was a sports psychology major at UCLA."

Jay's turn: "She's real open. She's one of these people who wants to talk about everything, but she respects the fact that if I don't want to talk about it, at that point, sooner or later I'll bring it up again and we'll talk about it."

Obviously, we're not dealing with Mike Tyson and Robin Givens here.

"I don't tell him anything important on Saturday," Debbie says of putting to work those psych lessons she learned. "We always laugh that I could tell him the house is on fire and he'd say, 'Oh, that's nice, dear.'"

Interjects Jay: "In my first year, a few weeks after I had just started to play, I was sitting in the chair watching something on TV, a UCLA game, I think, and she comes by and says, 'How's the game? Who's winning?' I had no idea. It was just kind of on. That's just the way I go about preparing myself for what I have to do."

A little background on the couple.

Debbie was a cheerleader at UCLA who married the quarterback. Really. "We met on a plane," Jay says. "She'd always told Jed Hughes (a Pittsburgh assistant coach and friend of Debbie's family) that she would never date any of the football players. We were coming back from Ohio State and I kicked the gentleman sitting next to her out of his seat and I sat there for the next 4½ hours, got off the plane and took her to dinner and we've been together ever since."

Back to Debbie: "He's only changed because we've had to go through so much. You really get your priorities straight. That's one thing we've always been able to do—talk, communicate, be best friends, work out our priorities. While football's important, the only time football's important is when he's on the field. Off the field, it's your friends, your family."

Don't let Al Davis hear your say that.

"When I get home and see the boys," Jay says, "it really doesn't matter. I spend as much time with them and try to have a cheerful outlook, because your kids are going to reflect the way you treat them. So, I try not to let it affect what I'm doing with the kids. And it has proven true because our two little boys are happy, and that's great."

The Schroeders' priorities got a



unique workout about a month after they were married. Jay had asked for and received his release from the Toronto Blue Jays in 1983 after a four-year minor-league career in which he never hit better than .234. He wanted to play football. She said OK, but only if he could outrun the linemen. So, Debbie would get up every morning with Jay when he worked out, timing his 40-yard sprints and even wearing about eight layers of sleeves to catch his passes. "Then we found out she was pregnant and was going to have our first child," Jay says—and that's yet another story of a top receiver being lost to maternity leave.

Between October '83 and the NFL draft in May '84, Jay was working at the batting cage his family owned and tending bar and clearing tables at a nearby hotel. At the same time, Debbie was teaching aerobics, teaching gymnastics and working at a department store. All this time they were living with his parents. So how did she ever get pregnant? "I told you we had a good relationship," Debbie smiles.

Schroeder's perseverance paid off when the Redskins took him with their third pick in the '84 draft. He got his break, so to speak, in a Monday night game in 1985 when Joe Theismann suffered his career-ending leg injury that ABC-TV replayed enough times to have it considered a mini-series. Then came the good (his 1986 Pro Bowl season), the bad (his 1987 shoulder injury and demotion) and the ugly (his campaign to get out of Washington). Tough times.

"That's not adversity," Debbie says. "The whole time we were going through this thing in Washington, my very best friend was pregnant with twins. She ended up losing one at birth. We went through all that with her and that really helped us get our priorities straight. I was there at the hospital with her and was able to share that with her. That would be adversity."

By now, the 15 minutes had stretched to nearly an hour. Jay was rubbing those explosive arms of his, trying to keep warm as the ocean breezes bit even harder. He had spent the day—weeks, even—trying to prepare for the role of Raiders' savior. That would take more work, as the next few games showed (including a 45-21 shellacking from Cincinnati, in which Schroeder threw four interceptions). But now he was excusing himself to deal with something more important—his family. ★

AGGIE SCHROEDER

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SPORT DATE

JAN. 1

NFL DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS It's in these semi-final games where you historically find the most excitement. Remember Miami's Strock-less comeback against San Diego in 1982, only to lose 41-38 in overtime?

2 BOWL DAY The big New Year's Day bowl games—the Orange, Rose, Sugar, Cotton, Fiesta, Florida Citrus, Hall of Fame—come the day after.

PRO BOWLERS TOUR It starts in Pinole, California, and runs through April 22. In its 28th year on ABC, the pinfest is the second longest-running television sports show.



6-13

THE NCAA CONVENTION
The members will take another go-round at rules regarding financial aid and recruiting.

7 HULA BOWL Hawaii has hosted 12 Heisman Trophy winners over the years, but the main attraction still figures to be the Beach Boys concert after the game.



8 AFC AND NFC TITLE GAMES Win or lose, sell-out or ghost town, each player will receive \$18,000.

16 AUSTRALIAN OPEN
Wilander is looking for his fourth title Down-under in the last six years, while the native Cash is riding a two-year string as runner-up.



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16-22

PHOENIX OPEN Sandy Lyle could become the first since Johnny Miller ('74-75) to win back-to-back in the Valley of the Sun.

21 SENIOR BOWL Not since last year's strike games have you had a chance to see NFL coaches (in this case, the losing Wild Card coaches) handle college-level talent.

22 SUPER BOWL XXIII The fun and games are at Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami this time. The AFC has won five of the last six Super Bowls played in Florida.



23-29

AT&T PEBBLE BEACH NATIONAL PRO-AM
They used to call it the Crosby; maybe now it'll be known as the Brett, as the KC star guns for his second amateur trophy in the last three years.

29 PRO BOWL The NFC holds a 10-8 advantage over the AFC in this annual excuse for a trip to Hawaii.



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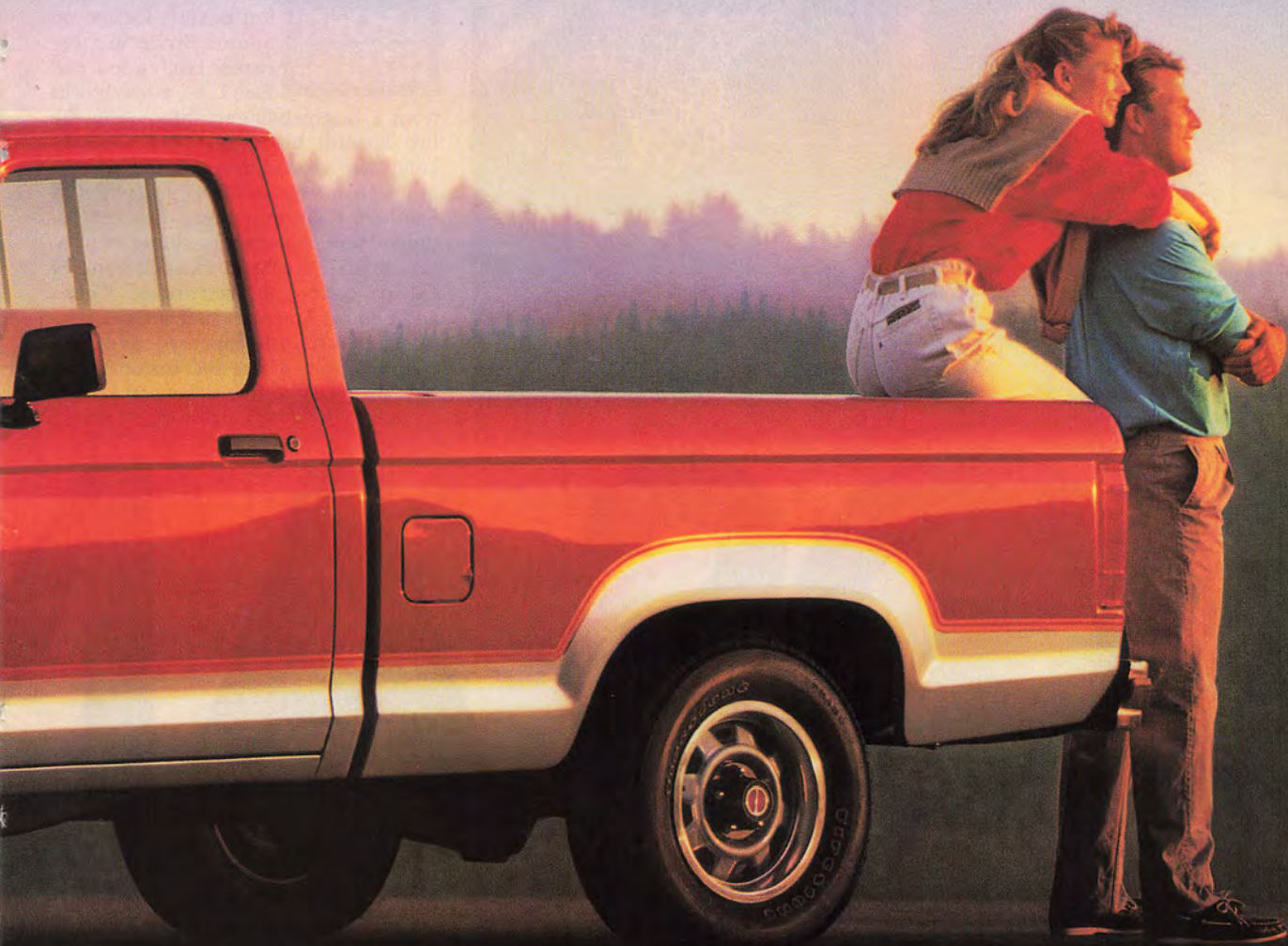
Ford Ranger XLT's changes for 1989 start with a new, more aerodynamic exterior styling and continue inside the cab, where the improved interior environment features redesigned seating and a newly designed instrument panel with tachometer. Thanks to its 2.3L Dual

Plug engine, this year's Ranger XLT features more horsepower than last year's model. And also this year, Ranger XLT features standard anti-lock rear brakes.

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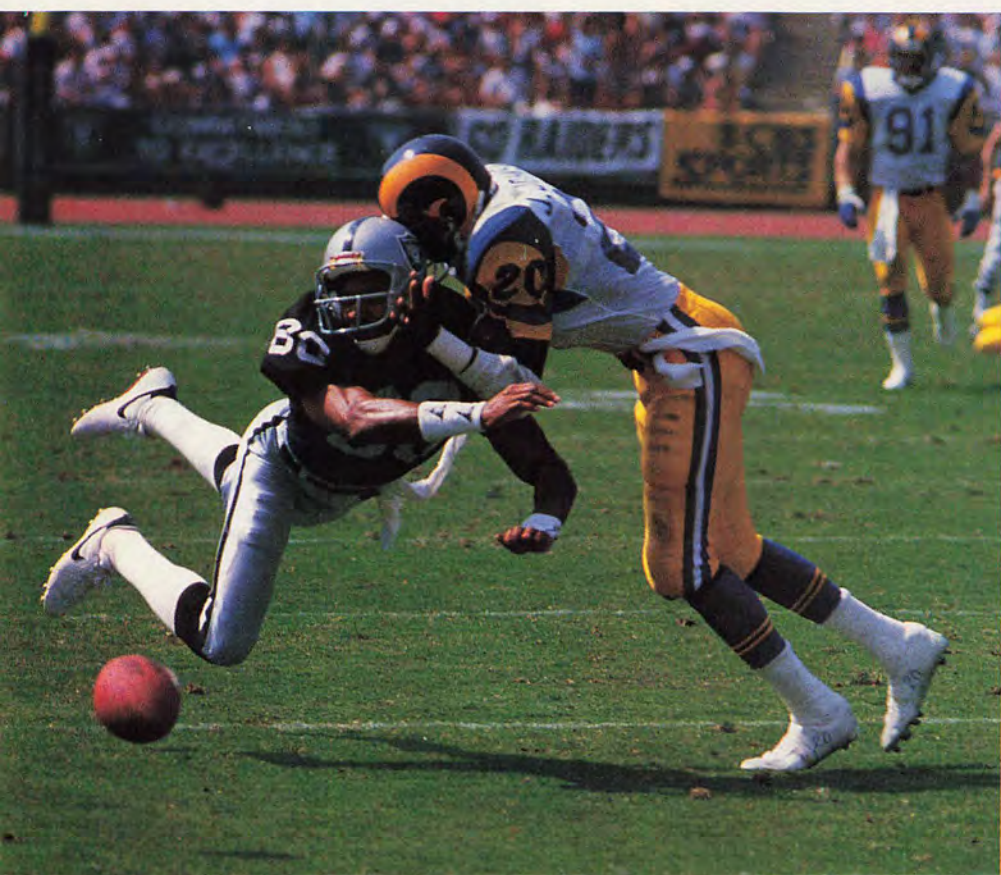
DOUG MAZZAPICA



If you're looking for today's Los Angeles, check out a little hole-in-the-wall called Tropical Bakery, located on Sunset Boulevard between Hollywood and East L.A., a few blocks

from a bright billboard promoting the live Spanish broadcasts of a Guadalajara team's soccer matches, and just two miles from the spiritual epicenter of Southern California sports—Dodger Stadium. Here, amongst the clutter of piñatas, sugar cakes and stacked cans of Gavinã coffee, an overworked Cuban and Central American staff serves up industrial strength espresso over the counter, from where the customers elbow their way to five rickety tables and

LOS AN



SPORTS FANS IN THE CITY OF ANGELS HAVE ONE COMMON LANGUAGE: WINNING
By Kelly Garrett

unfold their newspapers—*La Opinion*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *L.A. Weekly*. It's a consummate Los Angeles clientele: Hispanic, Oriental and Anglo. Black and white. Vendors and teachers. Mechanics and students. Mothers prying their children off the gumball machines and the occasional screenwriter (jeans and sandals, Raiders T-shirt) who knows better than to spend twice as much for inferior caffeine at some neon-type place with an unbearable French name on the west side of town. The only imaginable common denominator with this bunch—other than the espresso—would be sports. And indeed it often is, especially when Cuban-born owner Evelio Gonzalez, his voice as big as his baker's waistline, holds court on the future of the Do-yers or his favorite occasional customer, Jose Canseco.

(continued on page 26)



DOUG MAZZAPICA



ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN

NGELES



IRA GABRIEL



Los Angeles is an eclectic mix of championship teams and all-world weather, indoor greatness and outdoor grandeur, from the floor of the Forum, where the Lakers reign (top left) to the floor of the Coliseum, where the Raiders still do (bottom left), from the Palos Verdes peninsula (top center) to the playgrounds (bottom center), from the outfield of Dodger Stadium (top right) to the upper deck (above) and across all kinds of rooftops.

RENE BURRI / MAGNUM

LA STADIA

Los Angeles doesn't have much along the lines of those lovable, eccentric old ballparks like Fenway or the Friendly Confines. Nor will you find any ultra-modern, domed, nine-figure multi-sport monstrosity. But what you will find is an array of arenas with personalities as varied as the population they serve. It's not a city of long tradition. It's not the City of Tomorrow . . . L.A. is The City of Right Now.

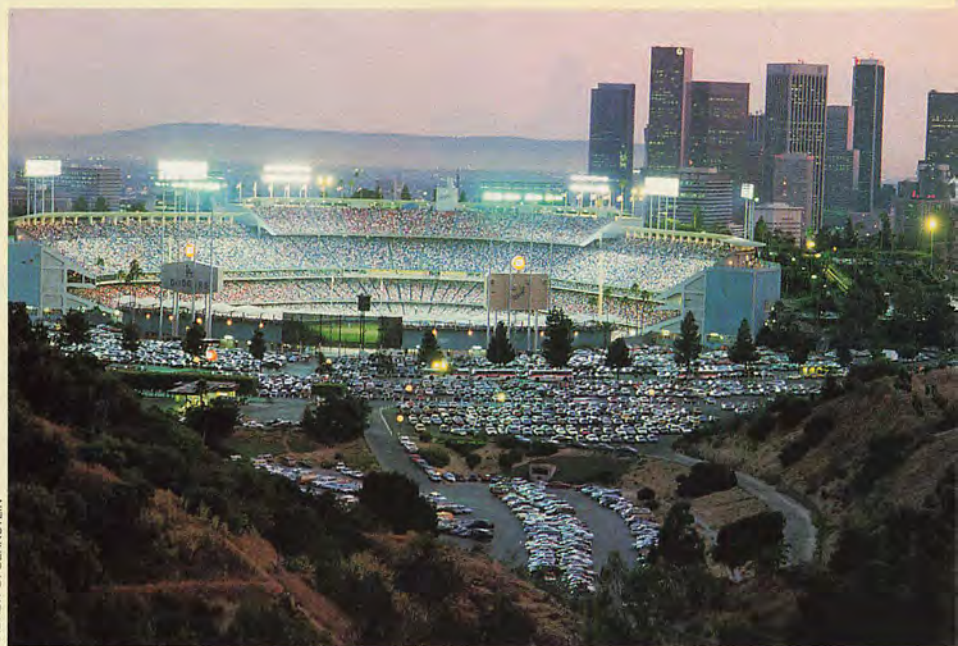
THE COLISEUM

Why does an enormous stadium in the second-largest city in the United States have such trouble holding on to tenants? If the Raiders move to that strip mine in Irwindale, which Al Davis keeps threatening to do, the Coliseum will once again be without an NFL team. How much can they charge USC?

The Coliseum Commission is regarded by its tenants as a bunch of miserable rackrents. It's hard to love a landlord, but the fact is that the Commission seems unwilling or unable to make concessions that other municipal stadia have been able to make in the interest of becoming more attractive rental properties. The Coliseum is a decent stadium, but the neighborhood is scary, the parking is inadequate and seats in the peristyle end are a football field away from the football field. Maybe it *would* cost a lot of money to build those luxury boxes, but maybe it would be good business to do it.

The fans turn out for Raider games, too. The Raiders are a blue-collar team in the great tradition of the old-time Packers, Bears and Steelers. Their followers, including the ubiquitous guy in a tank-top with a Bud in his hand and Zinica on his nose, constitute the most colorful crowd to be seen at any of L.A.'s sports events. How much longer they'll be brightening up the Coliseum is anybody's guess.

ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN



Another full house at Dodger Stadium, backed by the L.A. skyline.

THE COLISEUM

WHERE:	Exposition Park, downtown across from USC
CAPACITY:	92,516, the biggest stadium in the NFL
PARKING:	6,000
OPENED:	1923
COST:	\$954,872
TOP GATE:	134,254, Billy Graham Crusade, September 8, 1963
TENANTS:	Raiders, University of Southern California
PREVIOUS TENANTS:	Dons (All America Conference), Chargers (American Football League), Dodgers, UCLA, Rams, and the Olympics every 52 years.

DODGER STADIUM

Los Angeles was so anxious to get the Dodgers, the city virtually gave owner Walter O'Malley 166 acres of downtown land on which to build a ballpark. How much would 166 acres in the middle of L.A. be worth today? You could swap it for Central America and get change. Even then, O'Malley could have folded the ballclub, subdivided the land and made a fortune.

Of course he didn't. He kept the Dodgers going and made a fortune. Today they are the most profitable franchise in professional sports. They draw just over or under three million fans each year as a matter of course. One reason is that people like to come out to Dodger Stadium just to be there to watch games.

It's a dandy ballpark. For starters, the Dodgers get rained out about as often as the Ayatollah orders pork chops.

The place itself is clean. Not immaculate, as some say, but clean for a ballpark where 47,000 people eat popcorn and Dodger Dogs with mustard every night. Everything is painted bright blue and red. And the view, of scrub-covered hills and palm trees outlined against whorish L.A. sunsets, is straight out of an Ed Ruscha painting.

Dodger Stadium is the last private stadium built in this country. These places cost in the hundreds of millions of dollars today. A baseball team is a relatively small business. The average ballclub couldn't afford the debt servicing on a modern stadium. Of course, it helps when you don't have to pay for the land underneath it.

DODGER STADIUM

WHERE:	Chavez Ravine, next to Elysian Park, near downtown
CAPACITY:	56,000
PARKING:	15,352
OPENED:	1962
COST:	\$20 million
TOP GATE:	56,088, All Star Game, July, 8, 1980
TENANTS:	Dodgers
PREVIOUS TENANTS:	Angels

THE FORUM

In the Sixties, Jack Kent Cooke, then owner of the Lakers and Kings, complained that the Coliseum Commission wouldn't give him a break on his Sports Arena rent. "We're the only sports arena in town," the Commission reminded him.

"Not for long," he said, and built the Forum—"the Fabulous Forum," as

it calls itself in its own advertising. The fact is, they could have done a better job—a lot better job. The Forum is an eyesore. It looks like the Mother Ship, as interpreted by a guy named Vinnie who designs casino facades in Vegas. Parking? The Forum's P.R. people *won't tell you* how many parking spaces they have. "We don't give out that information," they'll tell you. Mention that every other venue considers parking a selling point, the answer will be, "You've got a bad attitude." There's room for 3,500 cars, by the way, so get there early—and don't tell 'em you read it here.

Still, the architecture isn't the attraction, unless you're talking about the Laker Girls. Gretzky and the Lakers play at the Forum, and the arena level really is full of movie stars during Laker home games. They're the only ones who can afford tickets.

THE FORUM

WHERE:	Inglewood
CAPACITY:	17,505
PARKING:	"We don't think it's anyone's business."
OPENED:	1967
COST:	\$16 million
TOP GATE:	18,699, Creedence concert, 1971
TENANTS:	Lakers, Kings, Lakers (MISL), Strings (Team Tennis)

PAULEY PAVILION

All those NCAA championship banners. Somebody stole them once for a prank. They were later returned. Doesn't matter. UCLA's NCAA men's basketball championship streak is to team sports what Joe D's 56-game hitting streak is to individual accomplishments. It may not be repeated.

UCLA is the only tenant Pauley Pavilion ever had. In John Wooden's day there was never an empty seat. Then the Bruins stopped winning *every single home game*. Actually, this is a slight exaggeration. From 1965 to 1975 (in other words, from Lew Alcindor to Bill Walton), UCLA lost *two* home games for a home court record of 149-2. They were unbeaten at home in eight of those 10 seasons, and lost one game in each of the other two. Every other basketball team in the world stumbles occasionally, but UCLA once went *five years* without losing in Pauley. When reality set in, some of the fans were stunned. "We lost. Bummer. What happens now?" Alumni were in therapy over it.

So now you can find an empty seat in Pauley, except for Notre Dame and North Carolina. The parking facilities are the university parking facilities, which is to say *not so good*. It's still a

great place to watch a basketball game. And now there's an extra ingredient: the outcome's usually in doubt.

PAULEY PAVILION

WHERE:	UCLA campus, Westwood
CAPACITY:	12,500
PARKING:	Campus structures
OPENED:	1965
COST:	\$5 million
TOP GATE:	12,961, UCLA vs. LSU, June 23, 1969
TENANTS:	UCLA

THE ROSE BOWL

Not many people know that UCLA isn't the first team to call the Rose Bowl home. Pasadena City College played its home games there for many years. Not anymore, though. Costs too much money to open the place up for a junior college game.

When they built the Rose Bowl, money was no object. Imagine building a football stadium to be used *one day a year*. The mind reels from such excess. Of course, in 1923 construction costs weren't what they are today. The Rose Bowl cost only a *quarter-million dollars* then. You can't put up a scoreboard for that kind of money today. "In fact," says Lathrop "Lay" Leishman, a member of the Tournament of Roses Football Committee, "every improvement and renovation we've made has cost us more than the original structure."

When UCLA moved over from the Coliseum in 1982, the Rose Bowl became the largest college football stadium in the world. (Michigan Stadium, capacity 101,000, is the largest stadium owned by a college.) Paradoxically, it's much smaller and cozier than the Coliseum, which seats 12,000 fewer people. That's because the Rose Bowl is just a football stadium. The seats run practically right down to the end zones. The Coliseum's field, which includes a running track, is much larger.

Every January 1, shivering Midwesterners look at the panoramic views of the Arroyo Seco rising up around the Rose Bowl, the San Gabriels beyond, and the blue sky over Pasadena as the Pac-10 champ more often than not lately kicks the bejesus out of the Big Ten winner. It's a three-hour commercial for Southern California real estate.

THE ROSE BOWL

WHERE:	Pasadena, in the foothills north of Los Angeles.
CAPACITY:	105,000 the biggest stadium in the NCAA
PARKING:	Anywhere in Pasadena and maybe La Canãda next door
OPENED:	1921
COST:	\$262,000
TOP GATE:	106,839, USC vs. Ohio

State, Jan 1, 1973—the largest college football crowd ever

TENANTS:	UCLA, the Rose Bowl Swap Meet
TYPICAL FAN:	Lives in Michigan or Ohio

THE SPORTS ARENA

The Coliseum Commission operates the Sports Arena. After the Lakers and Kings moved to Inglewood, it could have been the Amityville Sports Arena, a deserted and forbidding (though not very old) structure. The Commission's attempt to promote the place as a rock concert venue went on hiatus in 1975, when Los Angeles police arrested 300 dope-smoking Pink Floyd fans as they left a concert there. How many bands booked the Arena over the next five years? One.

USC has been the Sports Arena's consistent tenant over the years. For a long time they were its only tenant. But things have been looking up the past six years or so. The Arena now hosts L.A.'s Arena Football team. And of course there are the Clippers, who have been close to being an NBA team. Last year the Sports Arena booked 250 dates, competitive with the Forum, and turned a half-million-dollar profit. The rock 'n' rollers are coming back, too. Recent bookings include Springsteen, U2, Michael Jackson . . . even Pink Floyd, which was something of a sentimental reunion. So the place's reputation as a white elephant is no longer quite deserved.

Still, the Forum has Gretzky, Kareem, Magic and Jack Nicholson. The Sports Arena has Benoit Benjamin and Arena Football. Those 250 dates can't be as lucrative as the Forum's 250 dates. On the other hand, you can always get a good seat for a Clippers game. If you show up in Nikes and a warmup suit, maybe they'll even let you play.

Ben Pesta

THE SPORTS ARENA

WHERE:	Exposition Park, next to the Coliseum
CAPACITY:	15,310
PARKING:	6,000
OPENED:	1959
COST:	\$7.4 million
TOP GATE:	22,574, consumer electronics show, August 21, 1968
TENANTS:	Clippers, USC, Cobras (Arena Football)
PREVIOUS TENANTS:	Lakers, Kings, UCLA, Jets (American Basketball League), Sharks (World Hockey Association), Blades (Western Hockey League), Stars (American Basketball Association)

Sports brings people together, but nowhere does it unite such a diverse range of humans as in the City of Angels. Los Angeles is first and foremost a town of immigrants, the first waves coming from the Northeast and Midwest of the U.S., but more recently from points south and from across the Pacific. It's no longer the place at the extreme western edge of the American frontier; it's a still-growing cosmopolitan city at the eastern edge of the Pacific Rim.

Much of the country, influenced by media images and hack columnists who traffic in stereotypes, may still subscribe to the image of Los Angeles as some sort of fantasyland. But show business accounts for a minute fraction of the jobs in metropolitan Los Angeles. A more accurate label might be something like "Third World City." L.A. simply isn't an Anglo city anymore. In the next 20 years, the Hispanic population in the metropolitan area is expected to hit 40 percent, the non-Hispanic black 10 percent and the Asian nine percent.

And the typical Los Angeles sports fan isn't Jack Nicholson or Tatum O'Neal. It's a guy who works on his car in the garage at night, or the family man employed by the aerospace industry, or the waitress who switches shifts when she can get Laker tickets.

Perhaps it's fitting that in a town so positively influenced by immigration, so many of its brightest sports stars have come over after making their names elsewhere. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar arrived in a big deal from Milwaukee, just as he came in from New York earlier to play for UCLA as Lew Alcindor. Wilt Chamberlain, Kirk Gibson and Wayne Gretzky fall into that category. Despite the area's reputation as a breeding ground for athletic talent (a quick check of the 1988 Baseball Register shows 137 major leaguers born in L.A. County, and that excludes those born elsewhere but raised in L.A.), Los Angeles teams seem to have the knack—or the resources—of luring the most prestigious deities in the sports pantheon.

But much more significantly—and much more to the chagrin of other cities—Los Angeles has over the years imported (some would say heisted) the very teams that define its sports universe. In fact, of the six major professional sports franchises that call themselves "Los Angeles," only the hockey Kings were conceived locally, and nobody really paid much attention to them until Gretzky came to town.

L.A. sports fans have learned to live with this taint of original sin. The football Rams and basketball Lakers came west in 1946 and 1960, respectively, during times when their leagues were still more or less backwater; it's as though

they didn't really come from anywhere. Nor is there much guilt felt about the landing of the Clippers, a nomadic basketball franchise that's never really caught hold anywhere, including Los Angeles.

The Oakland Raiders' bolting southward in 1982 took on a slightly different hue. Reminded daily by newspaper accounts of legal battles between the team and the city of Oakland, Los Angeles fandom may have harbored some secret pangs of guilt about taking a prestige team away from a population that didn't want to lose its heroes. Perhaps as much out of habit as graciousness, the new Raider fans would often refer to their adopted team by its previous municipal connection, as in "How's Oakland doing against the Broncos?" There even seemed to be some willingness to share the Raiders' 1984 Super Bowl victory with loyalists from the East Bay; after all, the Raiders' following had never recognized city boundaries. That proffering of largesse died as soon as it became apparent from man-on-the-street interviews and live remotes from Oakland bars that the good people of Northern California weren't so willing to share their object of affection. Now the L.A. citizenry is militant about its Raiders, and has found itself involved in its own struggle to keep the NFL mavericks from skipping out to the suburbs.

The Raiders' residency in Southern California rekindled a smoldering barroom-style argument about the intestinal fortitude of L.A.-based sports teams. "Argument" may not be the word, since it seems to be taken for granted among

the pundits—and some players—that L.A.'s Mediterranean weather, abundant recreational choices, easy media access and generous per capita allotment of attractive members of the opposite sex somehow sap the resolve of its athletes. This line of reasoning is often cited as an explanation for the chronic failures of the pre-Gretzky Kings, as well as the more recent disappointments of the Raiders, who have somehow "gone Hollywood." Of course, the much more numerous successes of Los Angeles sports teams are conveniently ignored by espousers of this absurd theory.

That otherwise rational people sincerely believe the Raiders have missed the playoffs because highly paid professional athletes are thinking about bikinis on the beach says a lot about the license that is presumed permissible when it comes to psychoanalyzing Southern California. The stereotypes and outrageous caricatures feed off themselves to such an extent that the original referents of the alleged insights—the real people who actually live and work and play in Los Angeles—become nothing more than fodder for lazy critics and their one-liners. In that sense, Angelenos share the lot of Poles: The jokes are often funny but reality is seldom served. What's perhaps most revealing of the worthlessness of most of the commentary is that the two quick assessments most frequently applied to Los Angeles sports fans—1) Too laid back; 2) Too much life-in-the-fast-lane—are contradictory.

So Los Angeles sports teams and fans often serve as handy targets for the accumulated provincial frustrations of the less fortunate. But for old-time baseball lovers in Brooklyn, the hatred rests on a firmer foundation. It's been said that Flatbush has never recovered from the loss of its Dodgers. It can also be said that L.A. came of age as a major league city on that April day in 1958 when Carl Erskine threw the first pitch for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Los Angeles sports history can pretty much be divided into pre- and post-1958 eras. Before that, SC football and some romantic minor league teams (the old Los Angeles Angels and Hollywood Stars) were pretty much the only games in town. But after that, and particularly after the completion of Dodger Stadium (perhaps the most well-loved private bilking of public funds in history), all hell broke loose and reassembled in a glorious string of championships.

New York's baseball Giants came to California with the Dodgers, settling in San Francisco and continuing one of professional sports' most storied rivalries. That rivalry has ended, alas. Only once since 1971 have the Giants and Dodgers been competitive in the same season.



This billboard promoting live Spanish broadcasts of a Guadalupe soccer team's games points up the city's cultural diversity.

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Offer expires March 31, 1989 or upon closing date of ski area (whichever comes first). Coupons are not valid during holiday weeks of Christmas, New Year's and President's Week and on Martin Luther King's Birthday, January 16, 1989. Tickets good Monday-Thursday only. Newport shall not be responsible for any cost or expense related to late receipt of ski coupons. Allow up to four weeks for delivery.

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"BE AWARE, SKI WITH CARE"

JSP

But a more careful autopsy of the rivalry might reveal a more surprising cause of death. In truth, the inter-city antagonism flows only one-way—southward—along Highway 101. Bay Area residents hate Los Angeles deeply; Angelenos, like the rest of the world, love San Francisco. An L.A. native talks a lot about how much he'd like to move someday to Northern California, but never does. A San Francisco native swears he'd rather live in Tehran than L.A., but a lot of them end up with a San Fernando Valley address out of simple economic necessity.

Even without a steady rivalry, and even with first-class competition from the Lakers, the Bruins, the Trojans and the Raiders, the Dodgers own Los Angeles. Their lock on the hearts and minds of the populace can be partly attributed to the almost maniacal public relations emphasis of the front office; nobody knows how to go after a market base better than O'Malley and Company. But the main reason is that baseball itself is king in L.A.

The Dodgers have fans from Managua to Montreal, the Angels from Buena Park to Santa Ana. Advanced aficionados of the game know of the diamond exploits of USC, UCLA and Fullerton State. But the pursuit of baseball in Los Angeles goes way beyond all that. The grand old game is a year-long proposition in Southern California, and just about any collection of nine people take advantage of it. Any company big enough to file payroll taxes boasts a softball team. Youth baseball, much of it shamefully over-organized, is a way of life. And high-quality amateur and semi-pro ballgames take place virtually 365 days a year. That includes the Mike Brito League, whose eponymous founder (the discoverer of Fernando Valenzuela) can be seen behind home plate at any Dodger game, clocking the pitcher with his ever-ready radar gun. Brito's league, split into five eight-team divisions named after the likes of Manny Mota, Fernando, etc., schedules games year-round at public parks across the barrios east of the concrete Los Angeles River. The crowds are big and well-nourished by the private vendors, and nobody leaves early.

Another key date in L.A. sports chronology is also an April, this one in 1981 when the aforementioned Sr. Valenzuela conquered the very territory that his ancestors lost to the gringos in the 19th century. Other stars have arrived on the scene to transform the local sporting picture, notably Magic Johnson and Wayne Gretzky. But Fernando's impact went far beyond his significant mound achievements, and for good reason. The fuss was about more than shutouts and Cy Young awards; it was a belated and per-

LA VOICES

There is no shortage of sports broadcasters in Los Angeles. With seven big-time professional teams—not to mention a host of universities and secondary sports, along with several sports talk show personalities—it's hard to imagine a commute or a gardening chore that can't be accompanied by some radio play-by-play or commentary.

That's right—radio. Television may have pushed radio sports broadcasts into the background in recent years, but not in Los Angeles. The reason is simple: L.A. is blessed with one of the best—if not the best—play-by-play man in each of the four major sports. And each is at his best on radio.

CHICK HEARN

The Lakers' broadcaster does basketball with a passion for the sport and the medium. "Any looney can do a television show," Hearn once said. "But to create a picture on radio is a true art. I love it. I always want to feel everyone is non-sighted, blind, has never seen the game. And I have to create a picture for them with words."

Hearn may not be the announcer he was 10 years ago, but neither is he ready for pasture. In fact, he's an institution. As much as you tune in the Lakers in L.A., you tune in Chick. Enthusiasm for the game? A year ago February, Hearn broadcast his 2,000th consecutive Laker game. The last time he missed one was in November of 1965.

His personality can carry a broadcast. When the game isn't interesting, Chick is. He questions officiating and coaching, but not as a rooter and always with respect. He's as likely to criticize Laker coach Pat Riley—once his color man—as the opposing coach.

Hearn may be best known nationally for the phrases he's invented that have entered the lexicon of the sport ("He fakes him into the popcorn machine" and "The mustard's off the hot dog"), or even found a place in the nonsports

vernacular ("No harm, no foul"). Last year a producer taped a series of Chick-isms and turned out a rap record.

But it's not Hearn's quirkiness or colorful lingo that makes him a great basketball announcer. It's the thoroughness and rapidity with which he conveys what's happening. While the trend in basketball announcing favors a lot of irrelevant chatting and vicarious coaching during the action, Chick doesn't miss a dribble.

BILL KING

The Raiders play-by-play man does football from a knowledge base that goes well beyond sports. The erudite King certainly wouldn't be considered a Los Angeles announcer by his avid followers in Northern California, where he still broadcasts the Oakland A's and only abandoned the Golden State Warriors when the Raiders moved to Los Angeles.

King is a workaholic whose attention to detail brings a Raider game alive, even over the radio. Listeners get the entire scene at every snap—not just the down and distance, but every substitution, defensive set, and perhaps what play was run previously in a similar situation. King seems to have instant recall of events in Raider history that he uses to amplify what's occurring on the field.

Unlike Hearn and Vin Scully, King doesn't give the impression of lobbying for the Mother Theresa humanitarian award during broadcasts. He'll get digs in (former Raider quarterback Mark Wilson is a frequent target) and can be brutal in his honesty. But like all great announcers, his personality never takes over from the game itself.

King has a catch phrase ("Holy Toledo!") and you'll pick out words in his broadcasts you don't hear in ordinary conversation. But those words are there for description, not garnish. A runner will "lurch" or "juke" an opponent, or slither or stumble. Nobody just runs.

VIN SCULLY

The venerable veteran is something of a nationwide institution because of his network gig with NBC. But Los Angeles listeners know a different Scully than the one who banters with Joe Garagiola every Saturday during the baseball season. He almost never shares the mike during Dodger broadcasts, relating the game as though he were talking to you across the dinner table.

In Los Angeles, Scully is a familiar



ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN

Chick Hearn, long-time voice of the Lakers.

friend most fans grew up with, a man who never was boring but sometimes put them to sleep at night. That's because everybody seemed to have a portable Scully on a bedside table in the '60s and '70s. Deep in their hearts, most Dodger fans are sure that Vinny is speaking directly to them—and only to them—which is why that NBC guy named Vin Scully must be another person.

On radio, Scully is unparalleled when it comes to the use of anecdotes. Nothing can happen that Scully can't compare it to something that happened before, usually with humor. He rarely uses the same story twice and his mental file seems inexhaustible.

He speaks in the present tense and tells you what has happened before you hear the roar of the crowd. Aside from his raconteur skills, Scully has a keen sense of the dramatic structure of the game of baseball, and tailors his play-by-play accordingly.

BOB MILLER

The Kings' voice is the buried treasure of L.A.'s rich lode of play-by-play talent. Hockey is only now reaching a significant level of popularity in Southern California, and until a recent contract with a country music station, the Kings broadcasts skipped around the dial, often popping up on small stations with little range. But those who have listened—even those who don't appreciate hockey—appreciate Miller.

Miller does hockey with smooth precision, but his sense of humor comes through frequently. Although the team has seldom prospered, he almost always leaves the impression that he's enjoyed himself. His enthusiasm for the sport is contagious.

Like Hearn, Miller's strength is his

uncanny ability to relate everything that's going on during the game. His mistakes are held to a minimum, despite the speed of play. Some of the Kings' most ardent fans say they learned the game from Miller. Long before Gretzky's arrival, he was hockey's ambassador to an unbaptized listenership.

Despite years on the job, Miller treats each game as something entirely new. He has no distinctive catch phrases, no out-of-the-ordinary mannerisms. He stays away from clichés. Instead, his energy level and the excitement of his voice carry the action.

JAIME JARRIN

Not all the Walkmans and portable radios you see in the stands at Dodger Stadium are tuned in to Vin Scully. Jarrin is the mellifluous Spanish voice of the Dodgers—he has been for 30 years—and he's heard throughout the Hispanic community of Southern California and on into Mexico and other Latin American countries via a wide Hispanic network. In fact, he's heard by more people than any other L.A. announcer. Much of the English-speaking world got to know Jarrin during Fernandomania in the early '80s, when he served as Valenzuela's patient translator through countless interviews. But Jarrin's not an interpreter. He's a play-by-play man of unparalleled quality, elegantly relating events with an aesthetic, smooth delivery.

Jarrin crafts sentences much as Vin Scully does, but with less pretentiousness. His melodic South American Spanish (he's originally from Ecuador) is a joy to listen to, even if you don't understand it.

—Dan McLean and Kelly Garrett

haps even unintentional recognition by the L.A. sports establishment of the city's Mexican heritage, population and fan base. L.A.'s Chicano and Hispanic community is no longer just a geographic area of nonvoters without the power to prevent the bureaucrats from crisscrossing their neighborhoods with freeways. Fernando's arrival coincided with the emergence of Spanish-speaking Los Angeles as a political and economic force. The sports scene will never be the same, and everybody benefits.

One more seminal date: July of 1984. That's when Los Angeles saved the Olympics for the second time this century. It wasn't so much the huge surplus that resulted from Peter Ueberroth's workmanlike (some would say mercenary) approach. It certainly wasn't the string of U.S. gold medals; that would be like the Trail Blazers celebrating a Pacific Division crown after the Lakers and SuperSonics decided to sit out the season. No, L.A.'s fond recollection of 1984 had nothing to do with the jingoism so fashionable at the time. It's not as though the LAPD conquered Grenada.

What happened is that the town threw a great party when its detractors were sure it couldn't. It was an extreme case of L.A.'s reality defeating false perceptions. While most of the country stayed away fearing choking smog, traffic nightmares and uninhibited terrorism, the natives had a heck of a great time and saw a pretty good track meet. As the marathon and torch relay progressed through the streets, they seemed to weave the city together into a civic unity that, against all odds, really exists.

That's what sports can do for a town, even a sprawling and ethnically diverse metropolis like Los Angeles. The bonus for Angelenos is that the unifying qualities of its sports teams are so often accompanied by winning. The most suitable final word on the subject might take the form of a listing of just the most salient of those on-the-field successes in the major sports over the years:

UCLA 10 NCAA basketball championships, including seven in a row in the '60s and '70s.

USC Eight NCAA football national championships and 11 college baseball titles.

LAKERS Six world championships, including five in the '80s.

RAIDERS A Super Bowl victory in 1984.

RAMS One NFL championship in 1951.

DODGERS Seven NL West titles, including four in the '80s; nine NL pennants; and five World Series victories in 1959, 1963, 1965, 1981 and 1988.

LA OWNERS

In Los Angeles, like anywhere else, P.A. announcers and publicity types will always refer to the local franchise in the second person: "Leading off for your Los Angeles Dodgers..." But they're not yours, they're *theirs*. Let's meet *them*, L.A. style.

AL DAVIS

After every game, Al Davis quietly slips into the Raiders' locker room and visits each player. A pat on the back, a handshake. For some, a bit of technical advice, maybe an ass-chewing.

Peter O'Malley owns the Dodgers. Georgia Frontiere owns the Rams. Al Davis is the Raiders.

He gives his players advice, they listen. He gives his coaches a philosophy, they listen. Winning isn't life and death for Al; it goes much deeper than that.

He wants to scare you and beat you, in no particular order. He'll design an intimidating uniform, cultivate a sinister aura, fight the NFL, threaten to move his team into a gravel pit.

Forget all his catchy slogans, by the way. Davis lives every moment by this credo: Dominate your environment.

In L.A. he has uncovered a sub species of sports fan thought not to exist here—the tattooed, beer-swilling, foghorned diehard. At one preseason "Family Day," these fans viciously booed Marc Wilson, whom Al kept on the roster several seasons in lieu of a quarterback.



Al Davis, managing general partner of the Raiders.

Davis loves L.A. and will keep his team here forever, or until the city tries to cross him and he moves the Raiders to Seoul.

GEORGIA FRONTIERE

On game days Georgia paces behind the Rams bench, ready to reward outstanding achievement with a big, wet kiss. To a man, her players would prefer cash.

Georgia came by her money and football team the old fashioned way—she married it. I won't say she has a lot of ex-husbands (seven at last count), but it is rumored they have an annual picnic.

Madame Ram is shrouded in mystery. Who calls the executive shots on this team? Nobody in the front office speaks publicly. We don't know if Georgia is down there sending in plays or hors d'oeuvres. Long ago she stopped talking to the press, apparently dismayed at the way her quotes came out in the papers—accurately.

Georgia is a former chorus girl, singer and actress whose career ended when she married Carroll Rosenbloom, her sixth husband. He drowned in 1978 and left her the Rams. It ain't Broadway, but it's show biz.

Her football knowledge would fit on Al Davis' pinky ring, with enough room left over to run a square-out, but that doesn't exactly put Georgia in exclusive NFL-owner company.

She sees herself as a victim of anti-female football bias. But we would snicker at Joe Robbie or Art Modell, too, if they hired washed-up quarterbacks like Dan Pastorini and Bert Jones and posed for pictures squeezing the new QB's bicep and making goo-goo eyes.

Credit where due: It goes on Georgia's resume that she saved the franchise by hiring John Robinson.

It's also on her record that she was late for Rosenbloom's funeral. So what? She will be late for her own, too. She will be on time for Al Davis', however, and she'll be wearing tap shoes.

PETER O'MALLEY

His dad smoked big stogies, hunted polar bears and ruled baseball from the boardroom.

Peter O'Malley doesn't smoke, shoot or rule. He simply runs the Dodgers. He graduated from the Wharton School of Business and Finance (the Battlin' Bottomliners?), and was voted Most Likely to Inherit a Sports Dynasty From His Father.

Peter performs his duty of running the world's most successful sports

organization with all the fuss and flair of your average CPA. If he had lunch with the other six L.A. owners, O'Malley would be the one to divide up the check.

He never visits the clubhouse; he has a management executive (Tom Lasorda) to oversee that venue. He rarely appears in public, and is never seen without a suit and tie. His no-frills bio is buried on page 88 of the Dodger media guide.

Where dad was flamboyant and blustery, Peter is detached and formal. Nobody calls him Pete.

O'Malley's door is open to the media, but he tends to say things like (of one crisis): "We knew, fortunately, that all storms pass and brighter days were ahead." You might as well interview a fortune cookie.

Year after year he gives L.A. fans the cleanest stadium, the wackiest manager, the highest-paid players and the nattiest ushers and usherettes. Throw in the high rate of pennant winners and O'Malley comes off looking good.

Factor in the collusion ruling (in bypassing Tim Raines, the Dodgers seemed to collude more blatantly than any other team) and the Al Campanis affair (Al's firing was accompanied by the revelation that O'Malley's Dodgers didn't hire blacks as managers or to high management positions) and O'Malley's owner stock takes a bit of a dive.

Hey, nobody's perfect, although Peter's suits are.

JERRY BUSS

Now in his mid-50s, old Jerry Buss is slowing down.

Oh, he still dates the occasional 20-year-old bimchette bombshell, but Buss no longer asks her if she's got a younger sister.

Buss spent his boyhood 'neath cruel Wyoming skies, digging ditches for a mean stepfather and laying railroad track for the man, and he has pretty much devoted his adult years (some critics would challenge that last adjective) to making up for that lost time.

So he dates girls and watches sports teams; the former he borrows, the latter he owns.

Buss is actually two people.

Jerry is shabbily dressed, an aging lounge lizard, forever leading his bizarre entourage around Hollywood, meeting chicks and asking them if they want to come up and see his world championship basketball team. Life is a cabaret, old chum, with Magic Johnson the headliner. It's showtime.



Jerry Buss, owner of the Lakers and The Forum.

Dr. Buss is shabbily dressed, an ex-college professor with a Ph.D. in biochemistry, plays Monopoly without a board, collects coins, parlayed a tiny investment into a real-estate empire, once traded New York's Chrysler Building for the Forum, and reads voluminously. It's Thoreau-time.

To keep Jerry's Lakers winning, Dr. Buss has developed a team management style that is a model for the industry. He hires strong advisers (Jerry West, Pat Riley), quietly makes the final decisions, stays in the background (except for his nightly foray, with entourage and guests, into the Lakers' postgame locker room) and quietly pays the players a fair wage.

No front-line Laker has ever jumped ship for a better contract.

Future plans: Buy the Rams or a baseball team; ask the 20-year-old bimchette if she has an older sister.

GENE AUTRY

In 1947, Gene Autry hit the top of the charts with "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer."

Subsequently he bombed with "Bucky the Bucking Bronco," "Sonny the Bunny," "Barney the Bashful Bullfrog," "Suffy the Goofy Gobbler" and the klutzy California Angels.

Those clunker songs were one-shot failures; the Angels are an ongoing source of torment and agony for Autry. In sports, the two most enduring symbols of blind faith and misplaced trust are:

1. Charlie Brown trying to placekick the football every year out of Lucy's hold.

2. Gene Autry truly believing each spring that the Angels will win it all for the Singing Cowboy.

Unless you believe in jinxes, sooner or later somebody is going to have to blame Autry for the chronic failure of his team. For years, influenced by Hollywood, the Cowboy threw away his money on mostly non-productive superstars, because he believed in the sanctity of the marquee.

He's a kindly old coot, as friendly as the guy in the Bartles & Jaymes

commercials. But as a sports team owner, he's a great fan. He loves it when the Angels wins, hates it when they lose, and doesn't really know why they do either.

But why are we talking about Gene? The Angels' owner is really Jackie Autry, Gene's wife and junior partner (he's 81 years old, she's 44). She was a banker who managed Gene's fortune for 16 years. They married in 1981 and she has slowly, quietly moved into a position of strength in the Angels operation.

Jackie ushered out Buzzie Bavasi and ushered in an emphasis on the farm system and on saving money. You expected a banker to squander funds? She is also a recovering alcoholic who underwent rehab at Betty Ford last summer.

Now the Angels have a master plan, a coherent guiding philosophy, sober leadership. Unfortunately for Gene and Jackie, they're still the Goofy Gobblers of baseball.

DONALD STERLING

After getting off to one of the most promising starts in the annals of goofball sports owners, Donald Sterling has receded quietly into the background, leaving his team to provide the comic relief.

Sterling was a comet in that goofball stratosphere. Not long after buying the Clippers in 1981 he: plastered his face on billboards and bus ads all over San Diego; announced that he wanted his team to go in the tank in order to secure the No. 1 draft position; considered junking the concept of a team trainer; cut the office staff from 24 to four, except that he did hire a beautiful model who quickly climbed the corporate ladder and took over the head coach's office; let the team dwindle down to eight able players, to cut overhead; held a free-throw contest for fans for a trip to Mexico, then stiffed the winner; performed a courtside semi-striptease; was threatened by the league with a management takeover based on general incompetence.

Then, under NBA pressure, Sterling went underground. He is still seen courtside, but seldom heard from. He generally leaves team business to hirelings, yet the results remain consistent: the Clippers lose, lose—an awesome average of 59 losses under Donald.

The Clips draft and trade poorly, have horrible luck and provide a painful cross-town counterpart to the Swiss-watch Laker machine.

Behind it all is the smiling visage of

Donald T. Sterling, successful trial lawyer who parlayed his case winnings into huge Beverly Hills real estate holdings.

According to team general manager Elgin Baylor, quoted in the Clipper media guide, "He (Sterling) has a keen sense of what it takes to be successful."

Not to mention the patience not to rush it.

BRUCE McNALL

You're at a Kings hockey game, sitting next to a chubby, chatty fan who seems to know a lot about the game. Pleasant fellow, asks your opinion on things. During breaks he turns the discussion to rare coins, movie production, art, ancient history and thoroughbred horse racing.

Chances are you are sitting next to the Kings' new owner, the patron saint of L.A. hockey, the man who bought you Wayne Gretzky.

Shake hands with Bruce McNall, regular guy. He's the new owner on the block, the least quirky and eccentric of the Big Seven, and already a legend.

In L.A. we're still waiting to see the incriminating photos McNall must have had of Oiler owner Peter Pocklington. Back when McNall was just another Kings fan, he would often wonder, "Why don't the Kings go get Gretzky? It can't be impossible." Turns out he was right.

It was risky, though, buying the team and the superstar for \$35 million total. What if everything goes blooey and McNall loses the entire investment? Three more deals like that and he'll be flat broke.

McNall is just the average guy next door . . . lives in the same neighborhood as Barron Hilton and Hugh Hefner.

Interesting resume: Degree in ancient history from UCLA at age 19 . . . Made his first big bucks as a kid expert in ancient coins . . . Now owns a huge coin company, an art-relic-import business, 250 thoroughbred horses, a movie-production company, and did we mention Wayne Gretzky? . . . Has a wife and two kids and has three years to do something with his life before he turns 40 . . .

McNall models his management style after Buss—intense daily involvement, but leaves the basic hockey work to hired specialists and leaves the headlines to his players.

Little things: McNall had new uniforms designed for the Kings. Big things: Wayne Gretzky.

In short, too good to be true. ★

—Scott Ostler



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21. Soccer-team complement
22. Distress signal
23. Kind of wrestling
24. Before, in poetry
25. "A mouse!"
26. Rose Bowl winner in '86
28. Memorial Auditorium player
31. Tote-board statistics
32. Arctic ice
33. Heisman Trophy winner in '87: 2 wds.
35. _____ driver (wrestling maneuver)
36. Hangs ten
37. Alphabet starters
40. Prefix meaning "one"
41. Big Ten team: Abbr.
42. _____ gain (automatic first-down): 2 wds.
45. Dallas cager, for short
46. "No _____!" Roberto Duran
47. "Who do you think you _____?"
48. Cooperstown third-base man Traynor
49. Sun Bowl winner in '86
51. Spring-training month: Abbr.
52. Bull _____ (warm-up area)
53. Cozy
54. Sounds of astonishment
57. Pitcher Blyleven
58. Sugar Bowl winner in '87
61. Good buddies
62. NHL MVP trophy
65. Call _____ (do the quarterbacking): 2 wds.
66. Enthusiasm
67. _____ Haji-Sheikh
68. Workout center
69. _____ of corn (high fly ball)
70. Compass point: Abbr.
73. _____ caller (quarterback)
75. Freedom Bowl winner in '85
79. Dundee of boxing
80. Cooperstown outfielder _____ Flick
81. Breeding stallion
82. Character-building putt
83. Fry lightly
84. Televises

THE DODGE SPORT WORD PUZZLE



Puzzle answers on page 72

Puzzle by Stanley Newman

DOWN

1. Criticizes
2. Original Met _____ Chacon
3. Heisman Trophy winner in '71: 2 wds.
4. Ride the bench
5. Football referee, in slang
6. Egg cell
7. Not wide: Abbr.
8. Epsom Downs' country: Abbr.
9. "Be quiet!"
10. Sound system
11. Jim Nabors role
12. Anger
13. Wandered around
14. "You're All _____": 2 wds.
15. Mini-marathons: 2 wds.
20. Player transaction
24. Drop the baseball
27. 1500-meter gold medalist in Moscow
28. Polite address
29. Bowling-alley company
30. Air-gun ammo
31. Dionne Warwick's "Walk _____": 2 wds.
32. Tournament climax
33. "The Golden Hurricane"
34. Baseball's "Big Poison"
35. Adidas competitor
36. Steffi's "Grand" achievement in '88
38. Heisman Trophy winner in '73
39. Locker-room appliances
41. Public perception of a player
42. Site of the '84 Super Bowl
43. Historical periods
44. World Series MVP in '78
50. Rizzuto specialty
54. Guy's date
55. Strong _____ bull: 2 wds.
56. Big _____ Conference
57. Sheep's remark
59. Bluebonnet Bowl winner in '86
60. Tachometer reading: Abbr.
61. _____ State (Sugar Bowl winner in '83)
62. Goes up against: 2 wds.
63. _____ Drive: 2 wds.
64. Loser to Billie Jean King in '73
66. Where Ali KO'd Foreman in '74
68. Football Hall-of-Famer Sayers
69. Outfielder Lemon
71. _____ apple (5-7-10 split)
72. Wide receivers
74. Badminton divider
75. Unsold or Westrum
76. Chicken _____ king: 2 wds.
77. Cotton Bowl winner in '83
78. Brownies' organization: Abbr.



DODGE DAKOTA

This is the mid-sized pickup that stands alone. With up to 2,550 lbs. of payload. An available 8-foot bed. Anti-lock rear brakes. And available electronically fuel-injected V-6 power. Dodge Dakota. One-of-a-kind proof of the Tough New Spirit of Dodge.

On June 30, 1982, the criminally inept Colorado Rockies, who had previously been run out of Kansas City for failing to be good Scouts, stood accused by indignant citizens in Denver of impersonating an NHL franchise. So they packed their skates and sticks, tipped their helmets and fled to East Rutherford, New Jersey. On April 3, 1988, they finally arrived.

In the interim, they assumed an alias (the Devils), holed themselves up in the root cellar of the Patrick Division and attracted little attention in an area inflamed by the annual winter wars between the New York Rangers and the New York Islanders.

All that changed last April on the final night of the regular season when the Devils edged the Rangers out of a play-off spot by beating the Blackhawks in Chicago on John MacLean's overtime goal. While the Devils formed little piles of joy on the ice, the Rangers stared in silence at the TV in the player lounge in Madison Square Garden and tried to comprehend the reality of a world turned upside down.

Meanwhile, aboard a flight from Boston to New York, the Islanders greeted the news of MacLean's goal somewhat happier, now knowing that they were going to play the Devils instead of the Rangers in the first round. Six games later, the Patrick Division champions found themselves outhit, outworked and outhustled into an early summer.

Suddenly, the Devils are the new ingredient in a volatile mixture that afflicts the mental health of thousands of New York-area residents each winter: the rise and fall of the Islanders dynasty that won four successive Stanley Cups in the early 1980s; the Rangers' heartbreaking, ongoing quest for the old, silver bowl they last held in 1940; and the fast, violent, emotional nature of the game itself. "I've sat in the stands and seen how much fans feel the frustration," notes Doug Sulliman, a left wing who spent four seasons with the Devils before being claimed on waivers by the Flyers in October. "It burns their asses more than it does the players'. At least if you're a player, you can go out and get smacked in the mouth or something to burn off that energy. They can't do that. It just sort of builds up, I guess."

Thus, physically mature New Yorkers of both sexes feel compelled to hurl trash, vulgar chants and obscenities at rival fans and players. Marriages and friendships are sorely tested. Innocent children are taught the battle cries of either side: "1940!" or "Porvin S----!"

"It's unbelievable," says Kelly Hru-dey, the Islander goalie. "I'd be surprised if in any other sports the fans hang around and throw stuff at the other



NEW YORK, NEW YORK... NEW JERSEY

ONCE THE SRO
ATTRACTIONS, THE
RANGERS AND ISLANDERS
NOW HAVE TO SHARE THE
MARQUEE WITH AN
OFF-BROADWAY ACT

By John Rolfe



BRUCE BENNETT

team's players. It's there from the moment you leave your house. If I go into a diner, there's always people wishing me luck or saying they hate me. You can't hide from it if you have a bad game or season. It's outside pressure, almost as much pressure as you put on yourself to win."

The Devils' emergence as bona fide Cup contenders has turned up the heat. Rivalries burn hotter when stakes are high and all three teams now find themselves in a must-win situation virtually every night. Last season only seven points separated the six Patrick Division teams and the race this season for playoff berths will be tighter than spandex tights on a fat man.

"Rivalries begin when you take something away from another team and in this area you have three teams all fighting for the same prize," says Devils coach Jim Schoenfeld. "A lot of pride is at stake and we can't let up. It's just too competitive in our division. If we sit back, we're going to have an early summer."

Along with playoff berths and pride, the hearts, minds and wallets of the fans are up for grabs as well. The greater New York area is the only city in the country that supports three teams in one

sport, and it supports them comfortably. All three finished in the top half of the league in attendance last year; all three have lucrative cable television deals; and each stands to gain by cutting into another's share of market. New York fans of any sport may be vocal, passionate and knowledgeable, but they believe The Bill of Rights guarantees them a winner to root for. They often boast of their loyalty and lengthy service to their team's cause, but many are not above hitching a ride on the latest bandwagon to pass through town. The Islanders found that out in 1975 just as the Devils are now.

The Devils picked an opportune time to become a gate attraction. Attendance at Nassau Coliseum has declined in recent years as a new generation of Islanders struggles to emerge from the shadow of a dynasty. Discontent at Madison Square Garden has risen. Ranger fans are still howling for their silverware and GM Phil Esposito has promised to deliver quickly. He has to because more than a few Ranger fans have tired of yelling "Same old s---!" and are jumping ship and heading for New Jersey. The Devils know they must win to keep them there. The Rangers and Islanders know they must win to lure them back. The war is on.

Max McNab, the Devils' grandfatherly, 64-year-old executive vice president is sitting in the players lounge at South Mountain Arena, the team's training rink in suburban West Orange, New Jersey. Old Max is clearly enjoying himself these days. His team is, at last, a hot topic for the right reasons and business is good: season ticket orders are up from 6,000 last season to 10,000 this year. The Devils Fan Club is 1,100 strong. Fans wearing Devils sweaters have been spotted in cities as far away as Vancouver.

As players troop by, the strains of Bobby McFerran's "Don't Worry, Be Happy" waft through the room. Max ain't worried. And he's surely happy. For six years, he endured the NHL equivalent of The Dark Night of The Soul, even eliciting scorn from the usually diplomatic Wayne Gretzky, who in a huffy moment dubbed the Devils "a Mickey Mouse organization."

"We suffered terribly," he says. "Let's face it. I got slaughtered by the media. But everything we did, strange as it may seem, was geared toward winning the Stanley Cup when maybe we should have just been thinking about making the playoffs. We actually wrote down where we wanted to go and how we wanted to get there."

The Devils' plan called for shunning the quick-fix trade and building with draft picks, and from 1982 through

1987 their woeful finishes afforded them the opportunity to choose early and grab the kids who played such a large role in the team's success last season: forwards Pat Verbeek, John MacLean and Kirk Muller; defensemen Ken Daneyko and Craig Wolanin; and their crowning jewel, goaltender Sean Burke. The team adopted a scrapping, physical, lunch-bucket style of play, adding a touch of class as the draft picks matured.

Yet, instead of fans, all the Devils seemed to be drawing was closer to renewing their acquaintance with Atlas Van Lines. They sold out whenever they hosted the other local teams but they were orphans in their own building on those nights.

"It was like playing on the road," recalls Sulliman. "We were always a hard working team, but we were never a threat. The fans, they'd kind of root for us and say, 'I hope they do well, but not against my team.'"

McNab's strategy began to pay off in September of 1987 when he relinquished his role as GM to Lou Lamoriello, 46, an avuncular little fellow with twinkling eyes and a decidedly sunny disposition. When Lamoriello arrived after more than 20 years as a player, coach and administrator at Providence College, the Devils were playing competitively for weeks or months at a time but had developed an annoying habit of collapsing in the stretch.

"I believe in dwelling on positives," he says. "I liked the team's character, the way they stood up for each other. They were young, aggressive, but they hadn't experienced winning. It was very difficult for me to hear all the talk about when the team was going to go into a slump. The pressure to win didn't bother me, but when I thought it would bother the players, that's when I thought it would be wise to make changes."

The most significant change occurred last January, when Doug Carpenter, the team's frosty coach, was replaced by sunny Jim Schoenfeld. At the time, the Devils were mired in a five-game losing streak. Schoenfeld, as Sulliman notes, "knocked down all the old barriers" with his upbeat, go-get-'em attitude. The team responded by going 17-12-1, including a 7-0-1 streak that carried them into the playoffs. All the good vibes, hard work and winning made for boffo box office. The Devils averaged paid crowds of 14,291, a franchise record, and after finally succumbing to the Boston Bruins in the Wales Conference Finals, they were greeted by mobs of appreciative fans upon their return to Newark Airport.

Many of those cheering folks were refugees from the torture chamber in



Madison Square Garden. One such refugee is Ed from Hackensack, who after 25 years of anguish, is proudly wearing a red Devils T-shirt as he sips a beer in the corridor of Byrne Arena between periods of a Devils-Rangers game.

"It was a lot of heartbreak with the Rangers," he says. "It always seems they can't get there, can't win the big one. They're always changing. Esposito keeps trading because he wants an instant winner, but the Devils draft young players and stick with them. It's *our* team. The Rangers are going downhill. The Devils are the team that's taking over the area."

Determined to hold its newfound marketing edge, Devils management has bought space on billboards all around New Jersey, devised new, inexpensive 16-game ticket plans, and made the players more accessible to the public.

"But no matter what marketing strategy you use," Lamoriello says, "the best one is winning. You have to go back to the excitement that was in our arena during the playoffs last year. The fans expect that same thing again."

To many Devils' players, that means beating the Rangers. "Our rivalry has always been with the Rangers," says Pat Verbeek. "The Islanders are kind of off by themselves out there on Long Island. It's always sweeter when we beat the Rangers, because then you don't have people coming up to you and saying, 'Hey, I'm a Ranger fan and we beat you.' No matter where you go around here, you always hear some smartass saying, 'Let's Go Rangers!'"

Verbeek was, no doubt, treated to

that dreaded cry after the two teams met in the Meadowlands for the first time this year. The Rangers won 3-2 and these rather gruesome figures on the final stat sheet attest to the regard the two teams have for one another: four tussles, six scrums, seven ejections, one brawl, one all-out melee that featured Devils' assistant coach Bob Hoffmeyer brandishing a stick at Ranger coach Michel Bergeron, and 220 minutes in penalties.

"It was only an exhibition game," Bergeron admitted afterward, "but it was the beginning of the war."

"This," Jim Schoenfeld agreed, "is what you should expect this season."

Clearly, New Jersey's march last season to within one game of the Stanley Cup Finals has put an end to their days as the area's benign, free-lance rooting interest. As Islanders coach Terry Simpson notes, "New Jersey made two enemies at once last year."

Out on Long Island, the occupants of the Nassau Coliseum are feeling a bit shellshocked these days. Last season a young Islander team surprised their fans and, perhaps, themselves by finishing first in the Patrick Division and appeared to be on their way to becoming the rightful heirs to a dynasty. Then along came the Devils to send everything up in smoke.

"There's no question in my mind that if we had played the Rangers, we would have played harder and would have had a better work ethic," Kelly Hruby says as he sips a cup of coffee in the empty expanse of the team's home arena one morning after practice. "Against New

Goalie Sean Burke's acrobatic play (he was 10-1 after joining the Devils last March) gave New Jersey respectability and a playoff berth last year.

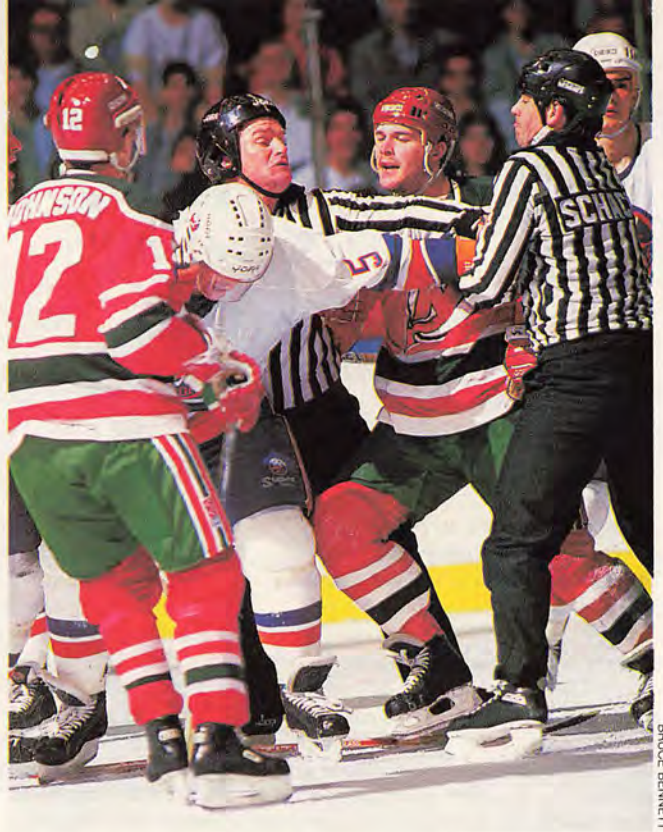
Jersey we weren't prepared to play that way. The Rangers bring out the best in the Islanders and the Islanders bring out the best in the Rangers. That's not a knock on any other team. That's just tradition."

Tradition indeed. One that began 13 years ago when Islander left wing J.P. Parise's overtime, playoff-winning goal gave a financially struggling, three-year-old franchise a stunning upset in its first post-season appearance and ignited one of the fiercest rivalries in any sport, college or pro.

"Beating the Rangers," says Ed Westfall, the right wing on the line that scored the winning goal, "really gave legitimacy to the Islander franchise in the eyes of the fans. That victory made it clear that the team could not be taken for granted anymore." Now the Islanders have done the same for the Devils. Once again, it is the stuff of rivalries, and new traditions.

"What disappoints me is that the fans here perceive us as being a poor team now, one that's in the lower echelon of the NHL," Hruby says. "We accomplished a great goal finishing first, but we had a real sour taste in our mouths after we lost to New Jersey."

Hruby sips some more coffee. "We found out that it's hard to live up to finishing first. Once you've had a mild degree of success, there comes added pres-



sure to succeed again. We really don't want to be recognized as 'they were the guys who were around for the next eight years after the team that won the Stanley Cup, and they didn't do anything.' Everybody still mentions the 1969 Mets. No one talks about the 1973 Mets."

The Islander franchise is now paying the price for its phenomenal success. Although the team has not endured a losing season since the Cup was surrendered to Edmonton in 1984, its failure to escape the division during the post-season has made many Islanders aware that time is running out on them.

"It's been tough for Bill Torrey [the team's GM]; he can only sit there for so long and let this team keep losing in the playoffs," says Brent Sutter, the Islander team captain. "I just hope for the players' sake, and for Terry's [Coach Terry Simpson] sake, that we start winning or management is going to have to start moving people."

Moving people is not an easy task for Torrey. His reputation as a master trader has left other GMs so wary of dealing with him, they have virtually stopped doing so. Nevertheless, Torrey is taking some heat while Phil Esposito steals headlines with his incessant trading.

"The media loves trades," Torrey scoffs. "I make trades but there just hasn't been anything out there. If I think a trade will help our team, I'll trade anyone. But I won't make trades just for the sake of making trades. We've spent a lot of time, money and energy developing this team."

So while Torrey doggedly sticks to his

guns, Islander fans are falling asleep. Islander home attendance last season—582,871—was the lowest total since 1974-75 and the team's annual post-season cruise to the Bahamas, a hot fan attraction during the Cup years, was cancelled last summer after attracting the interest of 12, that's right, 12 fans.

What the Islanders are suffering from is an image problem. Islander management has often been accused of underpromoting the team even during the Cup years, but Torrey considers such extracurricular activities to be disruptive to the team concept he feels is most conducive to winning. Now that the Rangers, who usually play to a packed house, have taken out full page ads for season tickets in the local papers and the Devils' new status as Cinderella darlings is garnering them plenty of ink, the Islanders' modest PR machine is whirring into action. But publicity won't be easy: The retirements of Mike Bossy and Denis Potvin has left only three members of the old dynasty on the roster and added seven rookies.

"If the question is, would I rather run my team like [Mets GM] Frank Cashen or George Steinbrenner," Torrey says, "that's not worth asking and not because Cashen wears bow ties and I do too. It will help this team to finally separate itself from those Cup teams, to finally get out from under that shadow. It's in the hands of a whole new generation now. They have no one else to look to now but themselves. There are no excuses."

But there's plenty of incentive.

"That loss to New Jersey was very

Devils coach Jim Schoenfeld (left) stood up to the officials as his players roughed up Denis Potvin and the Islanders in New Jersey's stunning first-round playoff upset.

humbling and very embarrassing," Kelly Hruddy says. "I don't mean to knock New Jersey, but that embarrassment, that anger, those are the emotions we want to take into this season."

Madison Square Garden is the center of New York's hockey solar system and there is a golden quality to the light inside that lends the sepia tone of old photographs to proceedings on the ice. It's a fitting touch given the three old banners, the most recent reading "1939-40 Stanley Cup Champions," that hang from the ceiling at the east end of the arena. Just below those banners, ringing the top of the arena, are the blue seats, the infamous home of the most raucous and vocal partisans in the entire NHL. Blue is a fitting color because those who sit up there have endured years of heartache, most of it at the hands of the Islanders. Now the Devils are lurking like Freddy Krueger on the edge of their Stanley Cup dreams.

"We were devastated when the Islanders won the Cup," says Debbie Rockower, a Brooklyn resident who serves as president of the Rangers Fan Club. "But it would be more devastating if New Jersey won it before we did. Even more devastating than if the Islanders won another one."

Ah, the Islanders. While many Ranger



BRUCE BENNETT

If the Islanders are to recapture their dominance of the early '80s, Pat LaFontaine will have to lead them.

fans are still a bit unsure of what to make of the Devils, they know how they feel about the Islanders.

The hostility of the MSG populace was first unleashed after Parise's goal handed the Rangers a defeat the local press called the most humiliating event in the franchise's 49-year history. Ranger fans later enjoyed a brief, euphoric respite in 1979 when the Blueshirts caused the playoff derailment of an Islander team many people thought was a lock to win the Stanley Cup. Then they spent five years chucking the contents of the Fulton Fish Market at Isles goalie Bill Smith while the Rangers took five fruitless post-season cracks at dethroning the champions.

Hatred of the Islanders became the concern of forensic pathologists after Denis Potvin broke the ankle of Ranger wing Ulf Nilsson in 1979. Although Nilsson publicly exonerated Potvin by calling the hit clean, Ranger fans still swear they saw Potvin attack with a chain saw. Without Nilsson, the Rangers lost the Stanley Cup Finals to Montreal in five games, the closest they have come to the Holy Grail since 1972.

Ranger fans thus came to view Potvin as the ultimate villain and his status as captain of the Islander dynasty made him a lightning rod for the darker impulses of MSG crowds. They urged him to drive a Porsche, the vehicle that carried Flyers goaltender Pelle Lindbergh to his death in 1986. They sang "Beat your wife, Potvin, Beat your wife," after details of the defenseman's turbulent first marriage became public. Potvin retired after last season, to sell commercial real estate in, of all places, Manhattan, but Ranger fans still howl at his ghost and while the rivalry with the Islanders has cooled a bit in recent years, ill-will is still palpable to visitors from Long Island.

"Madison Square Garden can be intimidating when its your first time in

there," Hrudey says. "The first thing that hit me was how much Ranger fans hate us. It wasn't so much an electricity in the air, it was genuine hatred. The fans were yelling the worst things at us."

Hrudey's teammate Pat LaFontaine adds, "When I joined the team, the guys kept saying, 'Wait 'til we play there.' During warmups, people hang over the glass, yelling at you while you skate by and showing how they feel about you with their fingers. I try to block it out, but it's almost relaxing in a way. I laugh at it now."

It is safe to say such hellish receptions will one day greet the Devils, perhaps as soon as the shock wears off from New Jersey's 5-0 shutout that wrecked the Rangers' home-opening coming out party. But Ranger fans presently appear inclined, as if by custom, to blame the Rangers for the early tee-time they were handed last season by New Jersey. The thunderous nature of Ranger fans often serves as a double-edged sword, making life less enjoyable for the hometown boys when things go badly.

"They say what they think and you have to harden up to it," says former goaltender John Davidson, the hero of the team's 1979 upset of the Islanders. "It took me four years, but it's better than playing in a city where no one shows up for the games."

Current Ranger goalie John Vanbiesbrouck adds, "They care so much if we win or lose that they're only letting us know how disappointed they are. Hey, when I sit on the bench, I react like a fan, too."

Phil Esposito, the team's flamboyant, refreshingly candid GM hears the fans, as well. "Christ," he says, "you don't think I got yelled at when I played? You don't think I get yelled at now?"

Since he assumed his post in July 1986, Esposito has done everything but bargain with Faust in his efforts to win a Cup for the Garden faithful. He's made nearly 40 trades, including one for Michel Bergeron. He's coached, cajoled, berated and exhorted his players. He even had signs posted in the Ranger

clubhouse that could have been written by the fans themselves. The most noticeable one says, "Enough waiting."

"I really thought I could talk them into doing it," he says, exasperation in his gravelly voice. "I thought I could psych them into doing it."

Yes, Phil is tired of waiting. He's also tired of reporters who suggest that the continual parade of players, coaches and GMs that has passed briskly through the organization in recent years may be the chief reason why the Rangers are having such a godawful time recapturing Lord Stanley's mug.

"The Islanders went eight years before they won the Cup," he replies curtly. "There was a lot of patience there. But that's not the Big Apple. That's not New York."

Yes, but Ranger draft picks have rarely been allowed to develop; instead, they've been turned into trade bait. Lineups are rarely allowed time to gel. Actually, Phil, the Rangers never seem to develop the kind of chemistry other teams like the Islanders and Devils say is the key to their successes.

"Again," he snaps, suddenly bursting with emotion. "It took the Devils eight f----- years. They didn't win any games. They didn't have any fans in their building. And Max kept his job. Do you think I could do that and keep my job? Do you think my boss would put up with that? That the fans would put up with that? That I would put up with that? Hell, no! I'd get the hell out before that happens."

So, how can we expect this three-way rivalry to wind up this year? The Devils have youth, talent and a coach who is a pure motivator. The Islanders have youth, and an intangible knack of playing better than anyone expects. But they also have a host of rookies on defense who will spend a tough first half learning the ropes. The Rangers have goaltending and defense, but no scoring. And then there's that chronic lack of chemistry. The Devils may backslide a bit (as young clubs often do), but they are the only one of the three with post-season plans built on something more than hopes and dreams.

Esposito rams his hands into the front pockets of his pants. "I've put together a team that's going to be very competitive. It's one I put together in two years when it should have taken me four. Not all the moves I've made have been good ones. Hell, no. I'm not infallible. I will make mistakes."

Suddenly he turns and fixes his gaze upon his trembling inquisitor.

"So what am I supposed to do?"

The answer comes echoing down from the now empty blue seats: Just win, baby. ★

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You don't have to be related to Red Auerbach to figure out that hoops has little in common with hockey, baseball or the hammer throw. But when a multitude of experts insists that basketball is vastly different from basketball . . . well, that's news.

"Our game and the pros? They're like apples and oranges," growl college insiders. "*Au contraire*, they're like day and night," NBA *aficionados* retort. And that's as close to agreement as those two groups of gentlemen come.

Different games, of course, require different skills to play them—or, at any rate, to play them well. Which brings us to the big question: Why do some great college players become great pros, while others, equally dominating on the college scene, muddle in mediocrity if they get to play for pay at all?

Talent, of course, has a lot to do with it. But, just as some law schools happen to produce more clever litigators than others, some college basketball programs just seem to be better at preparing *their* students for their future careers.

HOOPS AND . . . HOOPS

These days it's fashionable to say that college coaches are largely domineering egomaniacs who turn their players into robots so they can leave *their* imprints on the game. However, the truth is that the NBA doesn't require less coaching, just a different kind: the kind that creates good shots in about half the time that the college game does. The big difference between the games is the shot clock.

"A college offense basically is a *continuity* offense," asserts Indiana Pacers GM Donnie Walsh. "Because of the extra time, it doesn't emphasize recognizing and taking advantage of mismatches or mistakes. In the pros, we don't have that luxury. In fact, we run *specific* offenses to take advantage of a mismatch on the floor in height or ability. Then, once the defense adjusts to the mismatch, we'll have three or four immediate options in the play to take advantage of the double team."

And, if the defense is alert enough to eliminate some of those options, the pros—remember, the clock is ticking—

are generally forced to resort to a one-on-one or two-on-two game. Colleges, on the other hand, have those extra 21 seconds to run their offenses all over again and probe for a good shot.

This, naturally, affects the pace of the game. While a number of pro teams, always in search of the earliest good shot, will fast break even off of converted baskets or free throws—and all of them will break off misses—college teams generally reserve their running for turnovers.

"The fact is, you can't win an NBA championship playing a half-court game any longer," offers George Irvine, Pacer director of personnel.

Defensively, the main difference between the two games lies in the colleges' use of zones—though, truth be told, the pros these days are not above employing zone principles in their full- and half-court traps. Predictably, most college coaches prefer *their* version of the "D," relishing the opportunity to change defenses, use matchup zones, box-and-ones or triangle-and-twos.

Of course, the pros consider *their* defense the real thing. "While in college you might have two or three offensive weapons on the floor at one time, we usually have to face five scoring machines all at once," says Irvine.

Indeed, the seeming absence of de-

TALENT
COUNTS, BUT
YOU'D BETTER
HAVE A B.A.
FROM SMITH
STATE OR
THOMPSON
TECH

By Tom Kertes

fense in the pro game is more a function of too much ability on the floor and, at times, a lack of total intensity borne out of all the travel and the 82-game grind (versus the 30-game college season, where every minute of every game looks big).

WHAT THE PROS WANT

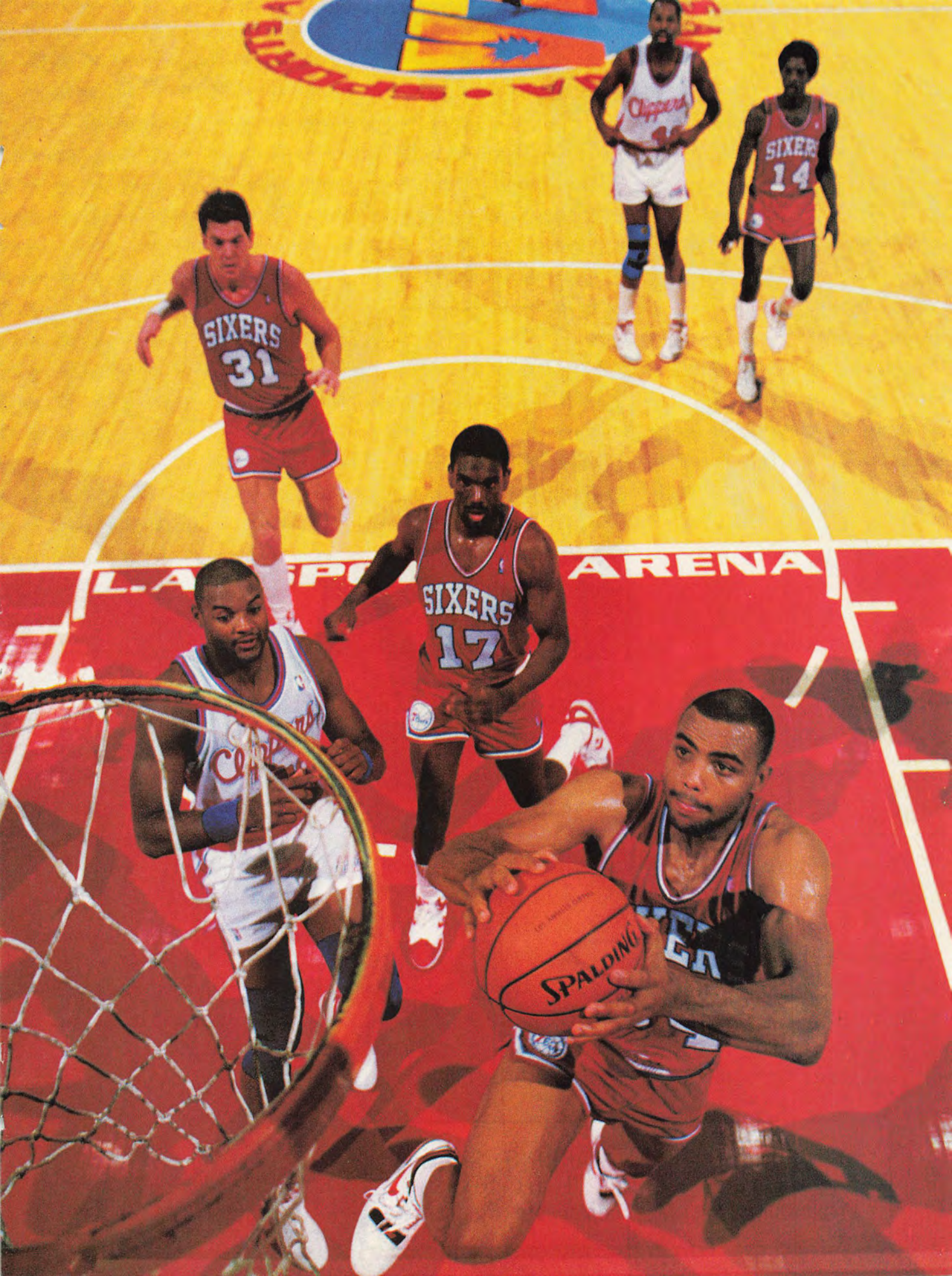
"The greatest difference is that, because the college game leaves such little room for individuality, even some of the best players simply don't know how to resolve situations on the floor," adds Walt Szzrbiak, an NBA and Spanish League scout. "In college, when you're defended closely and the offense breaks down, well, you'll just throw another pass. But in the pros the clock is running down, so you must resort to your one-on-one skills to resolve the situation."

When it comes time to evaluate college stars for pro potential, besides speed, quickness and one-on-one ability, the pros also crave height and width. And, particularly in big men, the gluey hands that can deal with the ever-clogged NBA lanes. They also look for defensive willingness and ability—not nearly as simple as it sounds since most college superstars are *told* to take it easy on defense in order to stay out of foul trouble. Plus, adds Al Bianchi, "One can't underestimate the importance of a player's habits, personality and guts."

More specifically, the pros are looking for specific skills for specific positions. "That 'positions are overrated' stuff is a lot of bunk," Walsh says. "A very slow point guard, for instance, can be pressured all too easy. A too-small shooting guard won't be able to defend. In fact, because of the overwhelming importance of matchups and mismatches in the NBA game, that's *exactly* what you're looking at when you scout: Does the player have the size and the athletic ability to play his position?"

A great NBA point guard, for instance, Philadelphia saw more in Charles Barkley than a fat guy who could rebound, and his pro career is proving the 76ers right.

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FROM CAMPUS TO STARDOM

Producing the most pros is one thing, but churning out the all-stars qualifies your alma mater as a bona fide basketball breeding ground. Only eight schools have seen more than one of their former stars play in the NBA All-Star Game in the last five years.

NORTH CAROLINA 4

James Worthby, Michael Jordan, Brad Daughterty and Walter Davis.

HOUSTON 3

Akeem Olajuwon, Clyde Drexler and Otis Birdsong.

NOTRE DAME 3

Bill Laimbeer, Kelly Tripucka and Adrian Dantley.

UCLA 3

Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Marques Johnson and Kiki Vandeweghe.

GEORGETOWN 2

Patrick Ewing and Sleepy Floyd.

DEPAUL 2

Terry Cummings and Mark Aguirre.

ARKANSAS 2

Alvin Robertson and Sidney Moncrief.

stance, must have great quickness and tremendous organizational abilities. "He almost has to be an executive on the floor," says Szzrbiak. "But, no matter how quick you may be, you can't just have one speed or the defense will be ready for you. The truly great point guard, like an Isiah Thomas or Mark Jackson, has that change of speed that can freeze the defensive player. And then he'll blow right by him.

"He also must be able to go to the hole, but without the layup being his primary objective. And even while in the air, have the peripheral vision to know where his teammates are so he can set up his shooters. He must be a great ball-handler, with the ball almost anticipating his moves, so he can create comfortably off the dribble."

Shooting guards also need a lot more than just shooting skills. They must own extremely quick hands and feet to be able to defend the Michael Jordans and Byron Scotts that populate that high-scoring position. They need an excellent transition game, deep shooting range and, most importantly, the one-on-one fundamentals that'll allow them to create their own shots. And, for the classic two-guard, ballhandling and passing have also become more-than-prominent skills.

"In fact, the trend seems to be toward teams where the point guard and shooting guard are almost interchangeable," Szzrbiak said. "Like Detroit with Isiah Johnson and Danny Ainge."

At center, because good big men are so hard to come by these days, the scouts seem willing to have more patience and take a less complete package. "Because it's the 'dirty work' in basketball, the first thing to see is if the guy can rebound and whether he *wants* to rebound," says Keith Starr, UNLV assistant and ex-Chicago Bull. Then, adds Szzrbiak, "you can work on the offensive stuff—the back-to-the-basket moves, the drop step, the ball fakes."

At power forward, the trend is moving away from the 6-8 to 6-9 one-dimensional, immobile rebounder. The ideal four-guy now seems to be the Celtics' Kevin McHale, who's 6-11 yet runs, shoots and handles the ball like a small forward, or the Lakers' James Worthy and A.C. Green, who are 6-9 but play at 6-11 due to their incredible extension.

And the small forward? Besides size, quickness and jumping ability, this is the guy who must be an absolute monster when it comes to mental toughness. "A Bird, a Dominique or an Alex English will usually take the big shots when the game is on the line," Szzrbiak says. "So, they have to be crazy, absolute egomaniacs. They have to feel they can make that shot, no matter what the defense does, any time they want to."

The ideal small forward also must have superior driving skills to set up his main weapon, the jumper. And it really helps if he's deceptive. "When a three-guy, like Bird or Aguirre, has that outstanding range *plus* he's faster than he looks, you're still going to play him for the jumper," Szzrbiak says. "Except, the next thing you know, he'll be right by you and make layup after layup."

CURRICULUM, PRO-STYLE

In spite of the differences between the games, college coaching can have a tremendous effect on a player's chances for a pro career.

"Look at us, for instance," says Auburn coach Sonny Smith. "When we recruited Charles Barkley, he was the fourth- or fifth-best player in Alabama. The top guy was Bobby Lee Hurt, who went to the University of Alabama and barely played in the pros. The same thing happened with Chuck Person. He was the fifth-best high schooler in the state, four behind Buck Johnson, who hardly gets any minutes in Houston. I have to believe that our philosophy and the style we play had a lot to do with the development of those kids."

So, what kind of college curriculum can make a difference to a would-be pro?

An uptempo style. "One of the reasons Byron [Dinkins], who was not a highly regarded high school player, has a chance at the pros is that we insist on pushing the ball up the floor," says Jeff Mullins, coach at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. "It's similar to the pro style in that it makes the other team run back on defense and probes its weaknesses quickly in order to get the easy hoop."

Man-to-man, instead of zone, defense. Playing mostly man-to-man accustoms you to a face-up, pro-style defensive attitude and develops your defensive footwork.

Concentration on the physical aspects of the game. "In the NBA, only the strong survive," University of Massachusetts coach John Calipari says. "So we hit the weights. All the time. And then we hit them some more."

Teaching of fundamentals. "At that early stage of development, you need a lot of individual instruction in even the simplest things," says former Tennessee star Ernie Grunfeld. "Shooting, defensive footwork, drop-step move, ball fakes, up-and-under moves—everything. You have to learn what works and what doesn't work. Plus the difference between a good shot and a bad shot."

A coach who demands a 100-percent effort all the time. "The all-too-common absence of that attitude—a coach that's afraid to tick off his star player by pushing him to the limit—can really hinder his development," says Mullins.

An offense that's not too restrictive. "If you stick your big man down in the blocks and don't allow him to do anything else, you'll simply kill his potential," says Mullins. "[Duke coach] Mike Krzyzewski is doing a great job allowing Danny Ferry to develop all those multifaceted skills. He's helping Danny's future pro career."

"It all comes down to this. As a coach, is it my responsibility just to win? Or to develop players to their ultimate potential *and* win in the process? I believe it's the latter."

THE IVY LEAGUE, NBA-STYLE

Since college coaching does make a difference, it makes sense that when they make their selections, pro GMs consider what program a player comes from. It's not the main criteria, mind you—talent, after all, is. "But there's no question about it, when you get a kid out of a certain program," says Bianchi, "you have a pretty good idea of what you get."



ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN

The quickness, ballhandling ability and peripheral vision that Isiah Thomas displayed at Indiana are the skills pro teams covet in a point guard.

NORTH CAROLINA

(Current pros include Michael Jordan, Joe Wolf, Sam Perkins, Al Wood, Brad Daugherty, Kenny Smith, James Worthy, Dudley Bradley and Walter Davis.)

Almost all scouts agree that, due to Dean Smith's team-first system, most Tar Heel players will score better in the pros than they did in college. And that they are highly disciplined and unselfish to a fault. However, though Carolina uses mostly man-to-man defenses, it's a scrambling man-to-man with oodles of weakside help. "A lot of these kids have to be retaught to play our kind of face-up man-to-man," says one scout.

Also, since the days of the Jordan-Worthy-Perkins teams, Carolina players tend to be far bulkier and not nearly as quick. A hulkster like Joe Wolf (7.6 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 40 percent from the field last year with the Clippers), for instance,

went 11th in the draft only because he was a Tar Heel.

INDIANA

(Randy Wittman, Isiah Thomas, Kent Benson, Mike Woodson, Uwe Blab, Steve Alford, Ray Tolbert.)

Similar marks as North Carolina, except Bobby Knight doesn't get the same caliber of talent out of high school, so most Hoosier pros tend to be role players. Knight also teaches man-to-man defense, but it's anything but a face-up type defense and doesn't impress pro scouts a bit. The players, however, are tough, fundamentally sound, play the passing lanes to the hilt and are well-prepared to deal with a demanding coach, to say the least.

UNLV

(Armon Gilliam, Sidney Green, Fred Banks, Reggie Theus and Mark Wade.)

Pro scouts place Jerry Tarkanian among the most misunderstood and underrated coaches as far as developing talent. "His practices are almost as organized as Dean Smith's," says Irvine. He

also lets his kids play, uses a pro-style offense and defense, and "really knows how to run" according to Walsh.

GEORGETOWN

(Patrick Ewing, David Wingate, Sleepy Floyd, Michael Jackson and Reggie Williams.)

Well, I'll be darned. The scouts love the physicality, toughness and discipline, but loudly decry the lack of shooting touch and overall absence of offensive skills of most Hoya players. "They have no rhythm on offense," one GM says. "It's one case where there might be *too much* emphasis on defense."

LOUISVILLE

(Rodney McCray, Lancaster Gordon, Milt Wagner, Billy Thompson, Darrell Griffith, Charles Jones and Derek Smith.)

Athletically, the typical Louisville flyer is most welcome in the pros. "But lately, Denny Crum's forwards tend to be in-between types," says Walsh.

PITTSBURGH

(Charles Smith and Jerome Lane.)

What Coach Paul Evans does best, according to ex-assistant Calipari, is run a system that showcases a player's particular talent. "He'll say to Lane, 'Jerome, if you work your ass off, you'll lead the country in rebounds.'" Evans, who developed David Robinson at Navy, is another coach who drives his players to the limit, so they're not likely to be shocked by a tough pro mentor.

VILLANOVA

(Ed Pinckney, Harold Pressley, Rory Sparrow, soon to be followed by Doug West and, perhaps, Tom Greis.)

From here, you get a solid fundamentalist who's been in a family atmosphere and really cares about his teammates. But Rollie Massimino's constant changing of defenses and overwhelming use of matchup zones gives pro coaches the toughest time teaching these guys NBA-style defense.

OKLAHOMA

(Wayman Tisdale, Harvey Grant, Alvan Adams and Ricky Grace.)

Predictably, Billy Tubbs' "run and press and beat your ass" system gets high marks for pro development. "He's very underrated," one scout says. "He teaches a great press like John Thompson and he lets his players express themselves on the other end."

SYRACUSE

(Pearl Washington, Danny Schayes, Rony Seikaly, Louis Orr, soon to be followed by Sherman Douglas and Derrick

Coleman.)

Coach Jim Boeheim gets high marks for the talent he attracts and his running game. Some scouts, however, question whether he's been tough enough to push guys like the Pearl, Rafael Addison or Wendell Alexis to their potential.

ST. JOHN'S

(Chris Mullin, Walter Berry, Mark Jackson, Shelton Jones, Bill Wennington and Kevin Williams.)

With names like that, Lou Carnesecca certainly deserves kudos for teaching solid basketball instincts, featuring his senior stars in a big way (consecutive Players of the Year in Mullin and Berry) and running a disciplined man-to-man defense. "Plus, even though he doesn't break that much," adds Walsh, "his players know *how* to break."

AUBURN

(Charles Barkley, Chuck Person, Chris Morris and Mike Jones.)

Any program that sends tons of flying refrigerators like these to the pros has got to have something on the ball. "It's very much a pro-like situation," says one scout. "They shoot quickly, call plays by number and either run or take everything inside. And there's emphasis on physical play and rebounding."

N.C. STATE

(Thurl Bailey, Nate McMillan, Spud Webb, Vinnie Del Negro, Chris Washburn, Charles Shackleford, Kenny Carr and Chuck Nevitt.)

Except for his slew of outstanding ballhandlers (Webb, McMillan, Sidney Lowe), scouts don't feel Jim Valvano leaves a particularly strong imprint on his players. But then how do you explain the sudden development of Del Negro from a college role player into a high NBA draft choice?

ARIZONA

(Steve Kerr and Tom Tolbert were in the last draft; Sean Elliott and Anthony Cook will be prominent picks this year.)

Lute Olsen is "the kind of coach who breeds confidence," says Mullins. "He's very strong in teaching versatility, how to look for your teammates, and in drumming into you an overall understanding of the game."

NOTRE DAME

(John Paxson, David Rivers, Orlando Woolridge, Bill Laimbeer, Bill Hanzlik, Adrian Dantley, Tim Kempton and Kelly Tripucka.)

Digger Phelps is a strange coach, according to scouts. "He plays a slow-down game, which is not much help," one says. "But it's an inside oriented

THE TOP "PRO" SCHOOLS

UCLA hasn't cracked the Final Four since the first year of the decade, but there are still more former Bruins in the NBA than players from any other school. When you consider that North Carolina and Indiana are nipping at UCLA's heels in the NBA players-produced category, it would seem that the glamour schools are still the place to look for future pro talent.

But while television appearances and your school's reputation may help your chances of getting drafted, it's talent and character that determine just how big a mark you'll make in the NBA. Which is more important? It depends on who you talk to.

New York Knicks director of scouting Dick McGuire says character is the key factor, and that's why the Tar Heels have 10 of their own in the pros.

"Basketball has gone away from the individual and come up with a team concept," McGuire says. "Look at North Carolina. Their heads are on straight in most cases and they play a team-oriented game."

North Carolina State head coach Jim Valvano also emphasizes the character factor. "The NBA is more complex than ever," he says. "They actually hire former investigators to go into the player's hometown and find out what kind of kid he was. When [Utah Jazz coach] Frank Layden was interested in Thurl Bailey, he wanted to know more than anything else what type of young man was Thurl. Was he coachable? The quality of the kid is just as important as talent."

Talent matters, of course, and if you ask Atlanta Hawks director of scouting Brendan Suhr, it matters a lot more than college coaching. "Just because a kid played for Dean Smith or Bobby Knight doesn't mean a ticket to the NBA," Suhr says.

Then why do Smith and Knight put so many players into the pros? Valvano has the answer to that one: "When you have programs that are traditionally strong, you're going to attract talented players. And talented players are going to make it to the NBA."

Talent or coaching, character or reputation, the fact that certain schools put more players into the NBA than others at least influences bragging rights. Here, then, is a list of the colleges who have sent the most (not necessarily the best) players to the pros in the 80s.

—William Ladson

UCLA	13
North Carolina	10
Indiana	9
Louisville	9
Duke	9
Georgetown	8
Notre Dame	8
North Carolina State	7
Maryland	7
Ohio State	7

game, so a lot of his big guys still show enough to get to the pros; and, once in a long while, like with Rivers, he lets a guard go and show his skills."

POST-GRADUATE WORK

No matter how much coaching goes on in college, the games have become so different that whatever school a kid comes from, the pros don't even expect to get a complete player out of the draft any longer.

The main problem is time. Or lack of it. "The concentration of most college players is about two and a half hours," Calipari says. "After that, you lose them. Now during that time you have to put in your team offense, all your offensive sets against man-to-man and zone defenses and various presses. Then the same with your defenses. Then the transition game. And the specific plays for your next opponent. And, I'm telling you, you haven't heard half of it. So most of the individual instruction, as essential as it is, is left for the early morning hours when we ask players to come in and work on certain things."

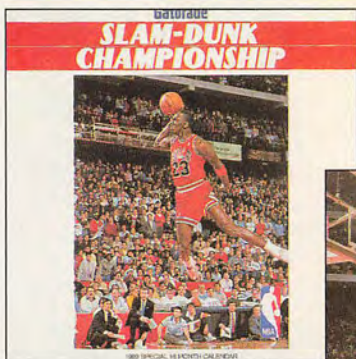
Freshman eligibility has also limited the amount of teaching done. Before, rookies spent an entire year improving their skills. Now coaches are under immediate pressure to get them into the system. No wonder Pete Newell, who owns the famous Big Man School in California, claims "basketball these days is overcoached—and undertaught."

Many experts agree that perhaps the most essential part of a player's development toward a pro career occurs not in school but over the summer. "Basically, it's not the college coach's job to anticipate pro needs," asserts Szzrbiak. "So, while he may work on your skills, if he needs a 6-6 guy to play inside—even though his pro position will be at guard—he might work on the wrong skills. But in the summer leagues, and even in playground pickup games, you're not restricted by a system and you can experiment with, and work on, your weaknesses. And playing against pros in these leagues will also give you that confidence that'll eventually turn you into an NBA player."

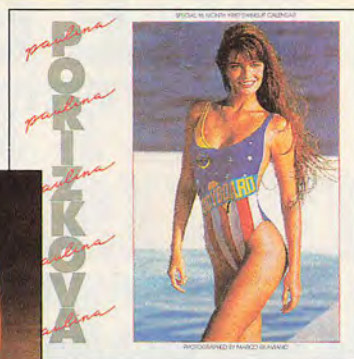
There's an incredible amount of teaching going on in the NBA, as well, these days. After all, they have the biggest incentive to produce well-rounded basketball students. "I'd say there's more teaching in the pros than in high school, college, the CBA or any other level," says Stan Kasten, Atlanta Hawks GM. "Let's face it, we have the time, we're at it longer—in fact, just about eight months a year plus all the summer leagues. And, most importantly, without it, we have *zero* chance to win." ★

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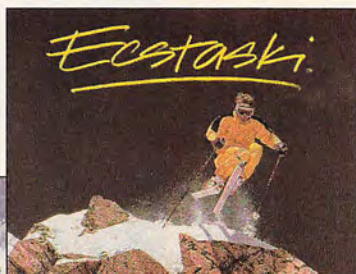


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THE BEST LITTLE DIVISION IN BASKETBALL

THE CENTRAL QUESTION IS . . .
WHO'LL FINISH LAST?

By Kevin Simpson

The document must exist, probably sheathed in black leather, somewhere in the deep recesses of a locked file cabinet or perhaps tucked away in David Stern's sock drawer. We are talking about the NBA's Five-Year Plan, the one that outlines the agenda for transforming the league's once decrepit Central Division into a six-team dynamo that has gradually tightened its grip on the balance of power.

There must have been a plan. The metamorphosis has proceeded too steadily, has revealed too much cogent strategy, has made too darn much *sense*. Remember when the NBA Central annually conceded the title to Milwaukee and provided comic relief—not to mention first-round draft picks—to the rest of the league?

In only five seasons, an infusion of stage-struck talent has turned Les Misérables into half a dozen teams with real marquee appeal. Go figure: At the close of the 1982-83 season, the division had compiled a pathetic .412 winning percentage; by 1986-87 the Central was the only division to boast four teams at .500 or better. Last season the loop had five teams *over* .500. (The last time that happened was in '82-83, when the pathetic Central sent the entire Atlantic Division into a feeding frenzy.) Five of the six best teams in the Eastern Conference last season play in the Central Division.

"There are no easy teams in this division any more," says Atlanta's Dominique Wilkins, who now only co-hosts the Human Highlight Film with assorted teammates. "A few years ago, there

were teams you didn't have to worry about. Now, if you don't go out and play hard, you get beat."

"It's a matter of the system working," offers Milwaukee coach Del Harris. "It's a matter of time before there's a changing of the guard—unless the teams at the bottom make bad draft picks or trade them away, or the teams at the top manage to stave off the inevitable."

Of course, that's precisely how the Central Division conducted business for the first half of this decade. But more recently, instead of squandering the picks, the former have-nots have discovered renewal and regeneration through fresh young talent. Indeed, it has been primarily because of the draft, not blockbuster deals, that the NBA now hosts the most feared Central committee west of the Kremlin.

You know the division has come full-circle when Milwaukee, once the perennial champ, finished tied with up-and-coming Cleveland.

IT HAPPENED IN CLEVELAND

The beginning of the end of the Central Division's futility isn't difficult to pinpoint at all. Where were *you* on May 9, 1983? George and Gordon Gund were busy buying an advertising company from Ted Stepien. The ad company

Dominique Wilkins and the Hawks came within a game of upsetting the Celtics, but with so many personnel changes, Atlanta could be starting all over again.





happened to own the Cleveland NBA franchise.

Players win ballgames. The Cavs' problem was that they either had no players or the wrong players. Their swift descent, like their subsequent rise, was chronicled in the morning paper less by the box scores than by the agate type beneath the heading, "Transactions." In a space of 16 months Stepien had overseen a melange of trades and free agent signings that left the Cavs with a stable of millionaire veterans past their prime, mediocre veterans who never had a prime and no first-round draft picks in the foreseeable future.

But never let it be said that Stepien didn't know how to build a solid franchise: four of today's top six Dallas Mavericks should have been Cavs. In three separate deals, Cleveland surrendered draft picks that ultimately yielded Derek Harper, Roy Tarpley, Sam Perkins and Detlef Schrempf. In return, the Cavs basically got Jerome Whitehead, Richard Washington, Mike Bratz and Geoff Huston. Every once in a while, Stepien's Cavs drove a hard bargain. When they sent their 1982 first-round pick plus Butch Lee to Los Angeles they held out for Don Ford and the Lakers' first-round pick in '80. Cleveland's draft-day savior was Chad Kinch. Two years later, the Lakers took James Worthy.

While the rest of the country reveled in Stepien's comic antics, the Gund brothers were not amused. For one thing, they owned the Richfield Coliseum. As the Cavs sank through the floorboards of mediocrity, the club floundered at the gate and fell into such financial disarray that the Gunds were in danger of losing a tenant. And though they'd been weighing the Cavs as a possible business venture for some time, the manic state of the free agent market—illustrated nowhere better than on Stepien's roster—deterred them. But on the day the NBA and the Players Association instituted the salary cap, the Gunds made their move—with the proviso that they be allowed to purchase supplemental draft picks over the next four years.

"Without the first-round picks, this was a team at the bottom with no young players," says brother Gordon. "They could understand why we wouldn't want to buy the team without the chance to make some first-round picks. There was no way we could convince fans to come back if they didn't think there was hope."

The draft picks offered hope, but for three straight years the Cavs made deals worthy of Monty Hall's evil twin: Stewart Granger, with the 24th pick of the '83 draft; Tim McCormick, with the 12th pick of the '84 draft, promptly transported to Seattle via Washington for Melvin Turpin and an appetite to be

SCOTT CUNNINGHAM/ALLSPORT USA

named later; Charles Oakley with the No. 9 selection in '85, only to ship him to Chicago for Ennis Whatley and Keith Lee (Oakley would go on to grab more rebounds over the past two seasons than any player in the league). When the laughter died down in 1986, the Cavs got serious. And seriously lucky.

The day before the draft, Hot Rod Williams was cleared in the point-shaving scandal at Tulane and allowed to play in the NBA—a year after he'd originally been drafted. On draft day the Cavs added center Brad Daugherty with the No. 1 pick, obtained in a trade with Philadelphia, shooting guard Ron Harper and point guard Mark Price, who arrived courtesy of a pick acquired from Dallas, of all places. That made four future starters added to the roster in the space of 24 hours. Two days after the draft, Cleveland announced the hiring of Wayne Embry as general manager—although his input during the job interview process already had shaped the team. Embry's advice proved critical in Cleveland's decision to make Daugherty the No. 1 pick instead of Len Bias. "It was," Gordon Gund says, "probably the biggest week in Cavs' history."

Embry didn't sit still for a minute. Within a month, he'd hired Lenny Wilkens as coach. Over the next two seasons—a span in which the Cavs improved by 13 victories to a 42-40 mark—he made moves that brought Larry Nance and Mike Sanders from Phoenix and, most recently, Tree Rollins from Atlanta. Two years later, only one player remained from the group Embry inherited—Phil Hubbard.

In the meantime, all four players acquired during the Cavs' big week, plus Nance, went on to average in double-figures. Price, the steal from Dallas, led the team in scoring during its five-game playoff loss to Chicago. All this team needs now is time. Sanity has settled over Cleveland like a warm blanket.

KEEPING PACE IN INDIANA

Where were you on May 9, 1983? On that very same day, another pair of brothers took the first steps toward resuscitating pro basketball in Indiana. Developers Mel and Herb Simon saw a franchise sinking rapidly in financial quicksand, losing players for lack of funds to keep them. Although the Pacers were just two years removed from their last playoff appearance, only two players remained from that team—George Johnson and Jerry Sichting. Spirited away by free agency and financially motivated trades were James Edwards, Mike Bantom, Clemon Johnson, Louis Orr, Don Buse and Johnny Davis—in other words, almost anybody of value.

At the same time, another ownership

syndicate was being formed to buy the team and move it to Sacramento. So the Simons bought the Pacers from Los Angeles businessman Sam Nassi. They promptly mounted a two-pronged attack on mediocrity. They would provide financial stability. They would be patient.

These days, the Pacers sign, and keep, their draft picks: they brought eight former first-rounders into camp this season. Some, like forward Chuck Person, have made instant impact beyond expectations. Others, like center Steve Stipanovich and guard Vern Fleming, have benefited from management's patience to become solid, if unspectacular, NBA players. The Pacers have resisted the urge to plug short-term holes, in the interest of stockpiling and developing the best players available, regardless of position. This strategy was born partly of design, partly of the fact that until recently, the league's wheeler-dealers didn't exactly salivate over the Indiana roster like so many kids in a candy store.

"For the first few years we were just building a team and acquiring assets," explains George Irvine, current vice president for basketball, who has served the Pacers in nearly every capacity. "We didn't catch any breaks." In 1983, for instance, the Pacers were just a coin flip from getting Ralph Sampson instead of Stipanovich. Two years later, when the draft switched to a lottery, they were bridesmaids again and got Wayman Tisdale instead of Patrick Ewing. This year, they once again had the second pick and took 7-foot-4-inch Rik Smits.

Like the Chicago Bulls of the pre-Michael Jordan Era, the Pacers are a team of competent players without a superstar. Instead, they have Jack Ramsay. To the mild surprise of Irvine and GM Donnie Walsh, Ramsay was willing to shake off the frustration of his final days in Portland to get back into coaching. He sought a club that had shown improvement and promise. Indiana remains improved and promising. Now they must produce.

"They've got a lot of good players," offers the Hawks' Wilkins. "It's hard to say why they haven't won more."

Actually, it's not. Bad chemistry is the answer given by some observers, but Indiana's 38-44 record would have been good enough to tie for second in the Atlantic Division! Somebody has to finish last. Person figures this year it's somebody else's turn.

Mark Price was taken with a 1986 draft pick from Dallas during the biggest week in Cavs' history.

Maybe one man can make a team, if he's Chicago's Michael Jordan, who's "good for 40 wins by himself."





ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN



MITCHELL LATON

NEW MODEL IN DETROIT

Only eight days after Cleveland and Indiana produced new owners to plug their sinking ships, the Detroit Pistons hired Chuck Daly to guide the shaky craft that had won only 37 games the previous season. But Daly found instant success where Scotty Robertson could not, simply because unlike Robertson, who insisted on a more controlled game, he allowed his coaching philosophy to be molded by his players.

"I looked at the club and I didn't think, with the people we had, we could be a good defensive club," Daly explains. "But this club could shoot the ball, so we went to an up-tempo game. I knew that had some liabilities, but it was the best way for us to play."

Daly was right. With Isiah driving, dishing and dealing and Kelly Tripucka, Bill Laimbeer and John Long doing what they do best—shoot—the Pistons shunned the Eastern Conference's traditional bump-and-grind in favor of the West's nimble two-step. They won 49 games Daly's first season, missing the division title by the slim margin of a final-game road loss to Atlanta.

Detroit won 46 games each of the next two years, but a playoff loss to now arch-rival Atlanta in which the Hawks averaged 122 points per game told Daly and GM Jack McCloskey that the Pistons had pushed this up-tempo business as far as it would take them in the division. They already had dealt for Rick Mahorn and drafted Joe Dumars, two positive steps toward defensive respectability, but the moves that more clearly defined the metamorphosis came in the summer of '86.

First, the Pistons drafted 6-foot-11-inch shot-blocker John Salley. Then they stole one of the best pure athletes in the draft, Dennis Rodman, early in the second round. However, the deal that may have gone the farthest toward making Detroit the defensive scourge of the Central was the acquisition of Adrian Dantley from Utah for Tripucka—a deal generally regarded as an exchange of offensive egos. Dantley was a marginally better defensive player at the small forward slot and, more important, his post-up offense provided a defensive edge.

"Dantley has a unique ability to get to the basket and draw fouls," explains Daly. "That means you don't have to defend as many transition plays. Any time you can create a foul situation, either by **Wayman Tisdale is one of eight first-round draft choices the Pacers brought to camp this year.**

Bill Laimbeer remains an offensive threat, but he and his Piston teammates have improved dramatically on defense.

dumping the ball inside or getting to the basket, they can't run out on you. That can make you a better defensive club."

Detroit, which had revved from sixth to third in offensive production immediately after Daly's arrival, fell off to eighth in the last two seasons. Conversely, a Piston club that ranked 18th in fewest points allowed during Daly's first two seasons jumped to eighth and then third in the last two years. Not coincidentally, they also jumped into the NBA Finals.

CHICAGO: ONE MAN CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It requires no doctorate in hardcourt philosophy to analyze Chicago's long-awaited return to prominence. Hardly more than a year after Daly signed on in Detroit, Michael Jordan started carrying the Bulls like no player has carried a team since, well, The Doctor himself.

But aside from propelling Chicago to its first 50-win season in more than a decade, Jordan has injected such a powerful artistry to the game that his presence alone tempers the generally hard-nosed style of the Central Division; with a more aesthetically pleasing element. Remove the historical perspective provided by four incredible pro seasons, forget the scintillating highlight footage and back up to training camp 1984, and you'll find Jordan already had started to turn Chicago around. It happened that fast.

"The first practice," recalls Rod Thorn, the former Bulls GM who drafted Jordan. "Literally. He was the best player, from the first five minutes. We'd run these fast-break drills that every team runs—3-on-2 and then 2-on-1 back the other way. The guy was maneuvering his body in traffic, going around or through guys like they weren't there. On the other end he was knocking balls away. He just was a cut above athletically. It just stood out.

"Plus, Michael won games; the team did better. We went from not being a real factor to being in the playoffs."

The exponential value of the Jordan factor revealed itself in only his second season, when injury forced him to miss all but 18 regular-season games. The Bulls dropped from 38 wins in Jordan's rookie season to 30—and only Jordan's controversial late-season return to the lineup allowed Chicago to sneak into post-season play. In a flurry of political derring-do, Jordan went public with his campaign to get back into action, even as management sought to have him sit out the rest of the season—a solution that would have ensured Jordan's health and a lottery pick in the draft. Jordan would have none of it.

"His whole theme," recalls then-coach Stan Albeck, now at Bradley University, "was nobody knew Michael Jordan's body better than he did. He'd gone back to North Carolina and was playing for two or three hours at a time. He felt perfectly sound. I pretty much backed him—we were two and a half games out of the playoffs with three weeks left.

"In taking on management, he was the first guy who came out in the media and said he felt he could play. In doing that, it elevated him to superstar status. Most players are told by their agents that if there's any doubt, don't play. But Michael has an intense love for the game. That whole city completely endorses Michael Jordan in every respect. Every beer-drinking guy who comes out of the foundry can relate to Michael Jordan."

Lots of folks around the league feel Jordan will find the load a little heavier this season, now that the Bulls have shipped enforcer and rebounder extraordinaire Charles Oakley to New York for Bill Cartwright, who might relieve some of the offensive burden. Even so, make no mistake: Jordan alone elevates the Bulls beyond the mediocrity that for years chilled Chicago hoop fans' passions like the wind knifing off Lake Michigan.

THE ATLANTA-NEW YORK CONNECTION

Could you believe it back in 1982 when financially strapped Utah traded first-round draft pick Dominique Wilkins to Atlanta for John Drew, Freeman Williams and plenty of cash?

"Dominique?" quipped Jazz coach Frank Layden, feigning horror and alarm in the deal's aftermath. "I thought we gave them Jeff Wilkins."

The deal was symptomatic of what had been going on in other struggling NBA franchises, but it proved a godsend for the Hawks. Even so, it wasn't until Knick ex-assistant coach Mike Fratello took over for Kevin Loughery that Atlanta developed a sense of direction that expanded on Wilkins' talents. It was Dominique on the attack—he would promptly lead the league in scoring—and a Hubie Brown-style pressing defense that was tempered with mercy and youthful energy.

"He tried to put a young team together, that was his biggest thing," Wilkins says of Fratello. "We had guys who wanted to win, that's the bottom line. He's a very energetic type of coach. You can't help but have some of that rub off on you."

A little bit of brutal athleticism started to rub off on the Hawks a year later when they drafted Kevin Willis and got Cliff Levingston and Antoine Carr in a package deal with Detroit. A final infu-



The Bucks stayed competitive largely by stealing Terry Cummings from the Clippers.

sion of youth in the summer of '85 brought Jon Koncak, Spud Webb and John Battle to Atlanta. Thus armed, Fratello coaxed three straight 50-win seasons out of the Hawks.

Although the Hawks lost a heart-breaking playoff series to Boston last spring, Wilkins claims his team learned that it could play with anyone—even beat the Celtics at the Garden. But how far can these lessons go toward achieving ultimate cohesion in the aftermath of last summer, when the Hawks saw Willis break his foot, Chris Washburn re-enter drug rehab, Tree Rollins bolt for Cleveland and Scott Hastings dispatched to Miami? While Moses Malone and Reggie Theus bring All-Star credentials, this team walks the tightrope between madness and greatness, self-determination and self-destruction. Now, it's as if, as Fratello says, "we're going back to the beginning phase and starting all over again."

OLD MILWAUKEE YOUNG AGAIN

Few coaches, caught in the slipstream of disparate veteran talent, manage to steer a team on a course for dominance. Don Nelson was one of them.

The mercurial rise of the Central Division has, to some extent, gone hand in hand with the relative demise of the Bucks—emphasis on *relative*. Last season Milwaukee won fewer than 50 games for the first time since 1980 and failed to win the division title for only the second time in the same span. Even so, the Bucks went 42-40 in the first year since Nelson left to become owner-executive

vice-president of the Golden State Warriors.

In the cleansing cycle of dominance and decline, Nelson avoided decline by taking the former San Diego Clippers to the cleaners. He dealt Marques Johnson, Junior Bridgeman and Harvey Catchings for Terry Cummings, Ricky Pierce and Craig Hodges and, with Sidney Moncrief as the nucleus, wove a patchwork of veterans into the fabric of his success. In the early 1980s, shrewd drafting kept Milwaukee on top, but Nelson got exceptional mileage from players generally considered elderly veterans, evidenced by a laundry list of acquisitions like Steve Mix, Phil Ford, Tiny Archibald and Mike Dunleavy, to name a few.

But when Nelson's relationship with ownership turned sour after 11 seasons, he bequeathed Del Harris a team many considered not only over the hill, but custom-made for Nelsonian basketball. "What they lost," figures Isiah Thomas, "is continuity." But Harris has kept Nelson's system—trapping defenses, mismatching offenses—basically intact. Besides, as an assistant and scout under Nelson, he has grown to know and appreciate the talent.

"The hard part wasn't having Nelson's players—the hard part was *not* having Nelson's players," Harris observes. He lost 195 player-games to injury or contract holdouts last season.

In spite of critics who cite age as a factor that will speed the Bucks' imminent and continued downfall, Milwaukee has only three players over 30 and some intriguing youngsters in Tito Horford, Jeff Grayer and Larry Krystkowiak. Even though the Bucks have no first-round pick next year and have found, to no one's surprise, that most teams are unwilling to deal draft choices, it may be premature to sound the death knell. A healthy group of Bucks led by Moncrief and Jack Sikma is more than capable of surpassing last year's win total.

You can believe the folks in the Pacific and the Atlantic Divisions aren't watching all this with a dazed fascination. Six of the first seven draft picks this year went to the coastal divisions—and significantly, only one of those picks was acquired via trade. Some teams, caught in the middle ground between glory days and the cellar, have turned to major deals to stave off decline as first-round picks become increasingly difficult to come by. Ultimately, judicious courting of unrestricted free agents may become the key element in the ever-shifting balance of power among the league's four divisions. For the moment, though, it's the draft.

Maybe there is no hidden agenda for the Central Division. Maybe it's just like Harris says. Maybe, just maybe, the system's working. ★



The short, skinny, clean-cut motorcycle rider from Oklahoma was standing on a platform at the Los Angeles Coliseum just before the finals of the Coors Super Bowl of Motocross—and his face was turning as red as his Honda gas tank.

Guy Cooper was known as “Air Time”—the wild man who won those \$1,000 prizes for the longest jump during Supercross heat races. But he had won little else as an independent who survived the national motocross wars for three years on a shoestring.

Seeking out the best jumping lines cost him competitively, but the prizes he won for flying as far as 92 feet gave him enough money to scrape by to the next race. As the

GUY AND JAYNI RODE OUT OF OKLAHOMA, SLEEPING IN PARKING LOTS AND WASHING WITH GASOLINE, LOOKING FOR THE RAINBOW AT THE END OF A JUMP. THEY FOUND IT

BY TIM CARLSON

track was prepped for the main event, Guy was awarded a \$2,000 check for recording the fastest laps of any privateer during the Supercross season. But he balked when Miss Coors approached for a ceremonial kiss.

“Gee, I can’t do that,” Cooper said. “My wife Jayni is in the stands, and I don’t think she’d like that.”

“Aw c’m on Guy,” said the announcer. “You can’t get in trouble before 45,000 people.” Some rowdies, who couldn’t understand why anyone would pass up a shot at Miss Coors, started to boo.

AIR TIME

Twenty laps later, Cooper paid a return visit to the winners' platform. He'd broken through to a higher level of riding, nearly scoring a spectacular upset in the biggest stadium motocross event in the country.

Cooper nailed the start and it took the best rider in the world—Honda star Ricky Johnson—making a stirring last-to-first charge after a crash, to run Cooper down. That night in June of 1987, Cooper held off everyone until there were two laps left, and even re-passed Johnson again, fighting all the way to the flag.

"At the beginning of the race, everybody was rooting for Ricky Johnson to catch up," said motocross journalist Jody Weisel. "But by the end people realized what Cooper was doing was important—and were rooting for him to stay ahead. The team managers used to think Guy was just a maniac because he jumped so far but never made the final. But the Coliseum race shocked everyone: Guy Cooper was a major talent."

Jayni, pronounced Jay-nah with an Oklahoma drawl, wasn't about to let anyone else share that moment. After the race she wiped off the dust and oily mist that covered her face as she gave Guy pit signals, and stood behind him on the victory stand, giving Miss Coors the eye. "I just wanted to let them know if Guy needed any serious kissing, I was ready," she said.

After all, it was Jayni who shared the 100,000 miles on the road since they married in 1984. They slept in their van at Walmart parking lots, snuggled together in the frost at Flagstaff, refused to wilt in the swampy heat of Axton, Virginia, survived a steady diet of McDonalds', managing to crisscross the continent for under \$5,000 a year—all so Guy could keep chasing the motocross dream. Earning her title as Guy's co-mechanic, Jayni refueled his Honda between motos and was willing to clean the grossly tacky air filter when required—using gasoline to wash her hands afterward. And Jayni was there to roll his Honda back in the van when one of his wild aerial maneuvers backfired.

"I didn't mind," said Jayni. "I like camping out."

That inspired Coliseum race, plus his tenacity, helped earn Cooper his dream: a factory ride with Honda in 1988.

Cooper joined approximately a dozen motocross stars employed by the four major Japanese factories in the United States. While Cooper's \$50,000 deal to ride the smaller bikes in the 125cc national outdoor championships, plus a few Supercross events on larger bikes, was perhaps a tenth of what Johnson and other top stars made with endorsements, it was a miracle he'd come this far.

While most hot young teen minicycle riders wait at home to get a factory con-

tract and an airline ticket to ride the national junior races, Cooper started serious racing at 21. "Guy was willing to get in a car and race the entire national circuit on his own," said Weisel. "All riders say they want to ride Supercross, but most just want the trappings—the box vans, flying to the races, sleep in motels and eat out—and go home broke. Guy didn't worry about the trappings. He and his wife just did what it took to get there. And it took a long time."

Stillwater, Oklahoma, is the home of Oklahoma State University, and it's famous for its Olympic wrestlers, football players and rodeo bull riders—not motorcyclists. But Guy Cooper was born into a Stillwater family for whom motorcycles were the world. Charlie Cooper, now 72, still rides grueling enduro events through the muddy red clay and tightly packed Blackjack trees. Guy's mom, Mary Ellen, 55, got a \$125 speeding ticket on her Honda 650 Turbo.

At 10, Guy started racing a Honda XR 75 in a little pasture outside Stillwater where they would stretch a big rubber band across the trail and drop it for the start. "I first thought he had the spark when he would flub up and crash, but he'd jump up and smile," said Mrs. C. "Nine out of 10 kids would throw a tantrum."

But Air Time first went for some sky on a motor-less BMX. "I put my Honda bars on my stingray and rode it like a motorcycle," said Guy, who at 14 was too old to keep racing mini-bikes and too small to move up to the 100cc class. Pretty soon, Guy was jumping fences,

Cooper signs autographs for an adoring L.A. Coliseum throng, while brother Jimmy keeps his bike warm.

barrels and vans on his BMX bike and then holding stunt exhibitions, organizing full-fledged, sanctioned races on courses in Stillwater Creek.

"He propped up a door by the bicycle shop and was going to jump a five-foot chain link fence," said Charlie. "I got a camera and focused it on the top of the fence. I figured he'd be lucky to clear it. But I only got the bottom part of the wheels. After that, I never worried about him clearing."

Jayni was just 15 when she went to Oklahoma City to watch her brother race motocross. "A friend of Guy's told me all about him," said Jayni. "He was so proud of Guy. 'You've gotta see this guy race! He's so crazy, you won't believe him.' Guy won the first moto and did a no-hander at the finish, something real crazy. Threw me for a loop."

Guy won a few motos at the Ponca City amateur nationals, which was good. But it was really impressive when he broke the frame in two coming off a big jump and dragged the front of the bike 200 yards across the line for a sixth overall.

Honda was eventually impressed enough to offer Guy two bikes, parts, and \$2,000 expenses to run the 125cc nationals and as many Supercrosses as he could make. Guy and Jayni married January 21, 1984, and hit the road. Jayni's dad gave them \$500, and they used it on their honeymoon: the Florida winter series.

In Atlanta, they awoke to find their trailer gone, with all the bikes and tools, and the Gainesville National and Daytona Supercross imminent. Desperate, Guy called his parents and offered to give them two more bikes due later in the year from Honda in exchange for two from their showroom.

"It was 24 hours of hard driving to get there, but we met them with a bone stock bike," said Charlie. "Guy's brother Chuck, who'd raced the nationals for seven years and got number 44, set it up."

Guy, Jayni and machine in the garage of their Oklahoma home, paid for in cash.



Guy took eighth overall and he went on to win Rookie of the Year in the 125 nationals."

Two months later, Cooper even started to impress some in California, the elite hotbed of the sport. "An Oklahoma salesman recommended him," said Kinney Jones, sponsorship coordinator for Malcolm Smith motorcycle products. "Nice kid, good local racer, parents owned a shop, a young scrawny guy. I looked at him: Poor kid, he doesn't know what's in store. No way in hell he can make it. It'll be an eye opener for him. He came to the outdoor National at Saddleback on a stock Honda 125 and says he hasn't jetted the carb yet, he's just going to see how it runs. I watch the start and he holeshots Johnny O'Mara and Ron Lechien and a whole national field! I thought 'Jesus Christ, this guy's got potential.'"

In practice at Saddleback, Cooper smashed his rear wheel trying to fly Suicide Mountain: a terrifying uphill jump with a 60 mph near-vertical takeoff, an 80-foot flight to a bone-jarring landing. Only a few riders on bikes with much bigger engines were up for the challenge, but there was Cooper, throttle screaming on his 125cc Honda.

During that first year on the road, Jayni made Guy learn the line between courage and stupidity. At Mt. Morris, Pennsylvania, Guy made a bet with a friend that he could ride a mountain bike down a steep, rocky hill. "Jayni got real mad and locked me out of the room when I went ahead and did it anyway," said Guy.

"I told him that was really stupid," she said. "What are you going to tell Honda if you break your leg? That you won five bucks?"

"The point was, I was pretty much a showoff and a wild person, and she tamed me quite a bit," said Guy.

In 1987, Jayni tore into Guy when he faded badly at the Lake Sugartree Nationals in Axton, Virginia. "I did throw a pit board at Guy and I'll never do it again," recalls Jayni. "It was super hot with super humidity and he won the first moto. But the second moto he was so tired, he dragged around in eighth and lost the overall. For weeks he had been going around saying he was gonna work out—but he didn't. I got real mad and told him 'You're outa shape! You knew what it took but you didn't put the effort into it!'"

For three and a half years Guy and Jayni lived in the east end of his parents' big brick house in Stillwater. Eating cheeseburgers, driving all night and sleeping in vans, using pump gas instead of racing fuel and doing all his own mechanical work finally paid off. With his Coliseum bonus, Supercross wins and contingency money, they paid cash for a



En route to the winners circle in a 125cc support race in Unidilla, New York, last July.

three bedroom house in the Quail Ridge subdivision in Stillwater. On top of the stereo is their favorite trophy: A framed canceled check for \$68,000 for the house.

"Maybe we coulda spent more and made up for it with higher placings, but my dad is real conservative—he taught me you can't spend it without income," said Guy.

Guy had started to make good money from off-season exhibition Supercross races around the world. Three-time world champion Eric Geboers had invited Guy for a December 19 race in Antwerp. The new, faster, slightly more sensible Guy Cooper still couldn't resist pleasing the crowds, especially after his rousing win at the Belgian Supercross.

After waxing the Euros, Guy decided to celebrate at the finish line jump, appearing to try to high-five the finish line banner. But a last second switch to a different line on the takeoff launched Guy high off a much steeper jump. He got clotheslined at his visor and upraised hand, falling like a wounded duck from 23 feet.

After a Belgian doctor put a rod in his right leg to mend the smashed tibia and fibula, Cooper told Alex Hodgkinson of *Cycle News*: "I have never done anything so dumb in all my life. There will be no

more acrobatics; I can't afford to take the risk again."

Roger DeCoster, the five-time world champion who manages Team Honda, wasn't thrilled: "If he was going to change a line to show off, he should have looked at it in practice. It may excite the spectators, but it doesn't pay off to jump to the sky."

The Belgian doctor told Guy he might start riding again in eight weeks, too late to really get ready for the first 125cc national on February 28. "Eight weeks to me meant five weeks," said Guy, "because I broke my ankles a lot back home. I broke one ankle three times, the other twice, and a lot of simple broken bones. I always cut the cast off myself and rode early."

Cooper had a friend make up a sticker like an international road sign with a red stripe through his old nickname, "Air Time." But after three weeks, Jayni was temporarily off guard, and the old daredevil had a relapse. Cooper bet some friends he could go hillclimbing in the snow on his 500cc bike. Luckily, the first 100 feet hurt too much and he parked it. After seven weeks, he rode regularly, stuffing the leg with the rod into his boot and wrapping it tight. Cooper tweaked the leg once again, but made it to the starting line at Gainesville.

He finished the first moto 15th and got six points. DeCoster told him to just take it easy and pick up a few points and treat it like a training run. "In the sec-

ond moto, I rode over my head and took chances, then after 10 minutes I backed off," said Guy. "But a deep rut caught the corner of my boot and twisted the heck outa my leg. I stopped alongside the track, trying to push my boot against the tire, because it was still pointed out sideways. It scared me so bad. Two more months down the drain!"

And maybe the career he had worked so long to build. "Before he had it easy and never got in shape," said Jayni. "Then it was going to be twice as hard to regain even that level. But for some odd reason, he did it."

And every day Guy stared at a motto Jayni framed: "You Can Be 125 National Champion—If You Work For It."

Like Butch and Sundance, Cooper is perversely inspired by long odds. He started swimming, training on bicycles, eating right, and he fixed up a no-twist knee brace and a cast, all stuffed in his riding boot. Thanks to a spring schedule filled with stadium Supercrosses, Cooper could take the next three months to heal and only miss one more outdoor 125cc national event—his main assignment.

While he was gone, Honda teammate George Holland had built up an insurmountable points lead, so Cooper went for broke. His first race back was in the swampy heat of Axton, Virginia. "I was just hoping for a top 10, but Guy went out and won the first moto," said Jayni, who fully expected Guy to wilt again in the second moto. Guy shocked her with a third place moto finish and the overall win.

At Red Bud, Michigan, July 3, Cooper flew a terrifying double jump, passing over rivals Donny Schmit on a Suzuki and Holland during a 1-3 overall win. At Troy, Ohio, Cooper again won the

first moto in deep mud. When the tear-off lenses on his goggles malfunctioned in the second moto, he threw them away, then fell. From dead last, he stormed. "I was so mad, I took off and rode like a maniac. I was buzzing by people, whatever it took. Then I fell again. I got up and worked up to fifth. My eyes were caked and I almost couldn't see. It was the hardest I ever rode."

By the final round at Washougal, Washington, Holland had clinched the 125cc championship, but Cooper stood just seven points behind Schmit for second. Cooper won the first moto to tie Schmit with one more moto to go. Second moto, first lap, he had Schmit in his sights when a Yamaha rider fell in front of him.

"At first I tried to ride over his bike," Cooper said, "but Mike was spinning around in there, too. When ya gas it and run over somebody, that's not cool. So I stalled right on top of his bike, and people are going by us like crazy. When I come by Jayni the first time, she wrote 18th on the pit board."

Again Cooper was a one-man Light Brigade, but he ran out of time. One lap from the end, he reached third place, but Schmit was 18 seconds ahead. Cooper cut the margin to 12, but remained two points down to Schmit for the season.

In a cruel sport where even champions are canned if they seem to have lost their edge, Cooper was hanging by a thread when he began the year. Then he demonstrated he was the fastest 125 rider in the country, winning seven motos and four overall victories. At 26, he survived the axe, signing a 1989 Honda contract for an estimated \$60,000.

Motocross may just be the ultimate

Darwinian sport.

For Cooper, survival in 1989 means winning the 125 championship or he should consider pumping gas in Stillwater. No more underdog excuses. His potential rewards are big: Honda bonuses for winning the national 125 crown could double his salary, and per-race win bonuses could add another \$25,000. European Supercross appearance money, clothing endorsements, and Supercross success might run his earnings near \$150,000.

But DeCoster sees flaws in Guy's style—his elbows hang too low and he hangs too far over the back of the seat, so he flaps like a rag doll hanging on after many miscues.

DeCoster says Cooper's thrift limits his horizons. "A kid who is 19 or 20 can gamble more than Guy," said DeCoster. "In Guy's mind, he wants to save as much as he can now, and he won't gamble it all to reach a higher goal. If I were a rider, I would definitely rent another place or an apartment in Southern California, because the factories test there all year. It costs a lot for Honda to fly Guy out and pay for a hotel. You can only do it so much."

Oklahoman Guy Cooper isn't much for fitting in. Ricky Johnson endorses two clothing lines: Too Hip and Life's a Beach. Ron Lechien arrives at races in a limousine. Until recently, U.S. factory riders were picked for stardom or oblivion by the time they were 16 or 17. Honda tabbed Cooper when he was 25—an age when most riders retire from too much arthroscopic surgery and too many compressed vertebrae.

"Only the top riders are supposed to make any money at the sport, not the privateer," Cooper said. "California riders are supposed to get the factory rides, not Oklahoma riders; and you're not supposed to be married."

Guy vowed no more letting go of the handlebars off a jump. But in a regional race in Colorado, he saw his friend Stacy Cook go wild and he got that look in his eye.

"Stacy kept doing no-footers, one-handers, and no-handers," said Guy. "It had been a while. Eight months. So one lap, I did a one-hander and it felt real awkward. But later, it started feeling natural again."

Sitting in his garage in Quail Ridge, he pulled out the old helmet with "Air Time" painted on the back. ★

Tim Carlson is a reporter for the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* and a contributor to *Dirt Rider* and *Super Motocross*.

Cooper is perversely inspired by long odds; Jayni locked him out one night after an especially foolhardy effort.



KINNEY JONES

A Manhattan is more delicious with a touch of Comfort.

Southern Comfort has a distinctive, appealing flavor.
It's a drink that makes any other drink taste that much better.

*Comfort Dry Manhattan: 1½ oz. of Southern Comfort, ½ oz. of Dry Vermouth.
Pour ingredients into glass; stir. Add a twist of lemon.*



The biggest bowl victory in recent years? Nope, it wasn't No. 2 Miami's 20-14 win over No. 1 Oklahoma in last January's Orange Bowl. Nor was it No. 2 Penn State's upset of No. 1 Miami in the 1987 Fiesta Bowl.

Rather, it was last January 12, when not one game was played. But on that quiet Tuesday, the NCAA's Division 1-A schools and conferences met in Nashville, Tennessee, to make a rather loud statement about our New Year's bowl weekends of the 1990s. The school and conference officials voted against a proposed one-game national playoff. With the vote, bowl directors everywhere rejoiced and got back to negotiating television rights and title sponsorships.

So instead, look for a record number—seven—bowl games on Monday, January 2, 17 games overall in December and January combined. If we're lucky, one of the January 2 games will cleanly decide a national championship, such as the Orange and Fiesta have done the last two years.

As it stands, complete with official title sponsors, this New Year's bout card had the Mobil Cotton Bowl (on CBS from Dallas) sparring against the Hall of Fame Bowl (NBC, Tampa) and Florida Citrus Bowl (ABC, Orlando) in the early afternoon time slot. Next, the upstart Sunkist Fiesta Bowl (NBC, Tempe) challenges the Rose Bowl (ABC, Pasadena) in the 5 p.m. Eastern time position. The USF&G Sugar Bowl (ABC, New Orleans) then duels the Orange Bowl (NBC, Miami) during prime time.

It seems a dream day for the more ardent, awake fans among us. You can zap the remote controls all day long, or tape one game while watching another.

But traditionalists, not to mention football widows, can only cringe at the concept. Strangely enough, many bowl officials also bend at the thought of that much bowling in one day.

"Showing seven games in one day is proof enough there are too many bowl games overall," says Bob Minnix, staff liaison for the NCAA Post-Season Football subcommittee.

The Sugar Bowl's executive director, Mickey Holmes, isn't too sweet on the notion, either: "Several games on New Year's (January 2 this season) will continue only if the television networks and corporate sponsors are satisfied with the diluted Nielsen ratings."

The three January 2 newcomers say they'll take their respective chances against the Big Four.

"New Year's is the most prestigious day in college athletics," notes Bruce Skinner, executive director of the Fiesta Bowl. "We expect to do well against the Rose Bowl. It's no worse than going op-



BOWLING FO

IN AN
ESCALATING
FREE-FOR-ALL,
THE BOWLS
SCRAMBLE FOR
SPONSORS,
POSITION, AND
SURVIVAL

By Bob Condor

posite *two* bowls in the earlier slot."

The 1987 Penn State-Miami Fiesta Bowl for the mythical national title was moved to prime time the night following the Big Four bowls. The Fiesta organizers, ever the aggressors, secretly negotiated a pact with then No. 1 Miami, switched the date to Friday night, and only then asked the NCAA and Penn State to cooperate. The game was watched in 21.9 million U.S. households (a 25.1 rating), setting a new bowl record. The previous mark was the Rose Bowl's 21.8 million that watched the 1980 USC-Ohio State tilt.

The Fiesta's big scoring pass, instantly establishing the Tempe event as a major bowl, came after only five years of New Year's appearances. That set some backfields in motion at other bowl headquarters.

The Florida Citrus Bowl (formerly the Tangerine Bowl, now renamed for the state of Florida citrus growers' sponsorship) has followed the Fiesta's lead. Dy-



MIKE POWELL/AL SPORT USA

OR DOLLARS!

lan Thomas, associate executive director of the bowl, waxes poetic about his game's potential. "Moving to New Year's in 1987 was the first step for us becoming the best of the bowls," he says. "It moved us from the 30-yard line to the 40-yard line in the press box. Now we're looking for even better seats."

Downstate, another Florida bowl man is equally sunny about shadowing the Big Four.

"We certainly feel Tampa is the right market to be part of a national championship game someday," says Jim McVay, executive director of the Hall of Fame Bowl, which debuts in the NBC New Year's triple-header coverage this year. "We think we can do it in a relatively short period. We are now part of the new year's bowl tradition."

The Hall of Fame Bowl? Part of New Year's tradition? If you've never heard of the bowl, don't worry, you've got plenty of company. The game is going

into only its third year in Tampa (after a stint in Birmingham, Alabama, now hosting the All-American Bowl, which, of course you remember, featured Virginia beating BYU 22-16 last December).

NBC apparently knows better. It deemed the Fame Bowl ready for its New Year's triple-header. "We sell the whole day as a package," says NBC spokesman Kevin Monahan. "We don't want the other guys to grab the early audience. Each bowl should lead into the next."

Of course, the Hall of Fame Bowl suddenly became a more appealing opening act just about the time NBC lost the Rose Bowl and decided to shift the Fiesta to a later start. Seems NBC didn't care to spend \$100 million for another nine years of Roses and told the game's officials to shop around for a willing suitor. So, ABC quickly proposed. Sorta goes nicely with ABC's Pac-10 and Big Ten regular season games on Saturday after-

noons.

While the Rose Bowl is rich in tradition (its first game was in 1902 and some 125 million viewers will watch its parade next month on the three major networks), the Orange Bowl is the wealthiest when it comes to producing No. 1 teams. Helping in no small measure to create that situation has been the Orange's automatic tie-in with the Big Eight. While the Rose Bowl is locked into the Pac-10 and Big Ten, the Sugar wed to the Southeastern Conference, and the Cotton arm in arm with the Southwest Conference—all leagues that have recently had their problems consistently producing No. 1-ranked teams—the Orange has enjoyed a steady procession of Oklahoma and Nebraska squads solidly squatting on Numero Uno or seriously vying for it. Add to that the boon of the ascension of Florida teams such as Miami, Florida and Florida State, and the Orange Bowl emerges as the most succulent of the bowl bonanza in the eyes of TV moguls and viewers alike.

The Sugar and Cotton have had their top-shelf draws as well—the Sugar more recently in 1983 when No. 2 Penn State beat No. 1 Georgia 27-23, and the Cotton back in the Texas glory days of the early '70s. But aside from the quirky 1984 Holiday Bowl in which BYU won its championship, no other bowl has produced a national champion in decades.

But the so-called minor bowls have produced some clunkers over the years. And with 17 bowls (going to 20 next season), a lot of 6-5 and 7-4 teams are making it to post-season play.

Other cases in point: Big-time programs Florida and Virginia were both 6-5 last season. They went to the Aloha and All-American Bowls, respectively.

Texas and Pittsburgh went to a bowl last December, too, but haven't gotten paid yet. The Bluebonnet Bowl still owes NCAA schools \$400,000 in payouts. In an early October meeting, the NCAA did not certify the Bluebonnet for this season.

Eight of the 17 remaining bowls already have title sponsors for their games, including the Sugar (USF&G), Florida Citrus (state citrus growers) and Fiesta (Sunkist) on New Year's. Almost all of the other games are looking for one, including two new bowls slated for 1990: the Crab Bowl in Baltimore and the Cactus Bowl in Tucson (yes, you read it right). Only the Rose Bowl and Liberty Bowl have gone on record against adding a company name to their titles.

"The press makes more of an issue of corporate sponsorship than the fans do," contends Mike Trager, chairman of Sports Marketing Television International in Greenwich, Connecticut, which secured the Mobil sponsorship for the

Cotton Bowl.

The NCAA is also concerned about this, and, in fact, will not allow a beer, wine or tobacco company to be a title sponsor. And it restricts the number of ad spots each industry can secure in any one game. But who really believes that corporate America, given a full head of steam, could ever wholly resist the tantalizing temptation to overcommercialize the bowl games?

Hmmm. Too many games, begging for financial bail-outs, trying to squeeze into a limited limelight, scheduling patchwork matchups and shoveling them like that well-known bovine by-product to an inevitably burning-out audience... what could be wrong?

Nothing that a college football playoff couldn't fix. ★

Bob Condor is a deputy features editor for the *New York Daily News*.

1988-89 BOWL LINEUP

California Bowl Dec. 12

Fresno, ESPN, 4 p.m. (all times E.S.T.), \$132,550 payout to each team last season.

Independence Bowl Dec. 12

Shreveport, Mizlou, 8 p.m., \$500,000.

John Hancock Sun Bowl Dec. 24

El Paso, CBS, 12:30 p.m., \$750,000.

Eagle Aloha Bowl Dec. 25

Honolulu, ABC, 3:30 p.m., \$500,000.

Liberty Bowl Dec. 28

Memphis, Raycom, 8 p.m., \$776,700.

All-American Bowl Dec. 29

Birmingham, ESPN, 8 p.m., \$630,000.

Freedom Bowl Dec. 30

Anaheim, Mizlou, 6 p.m., \$500,000.

Mazda Gator Bowl Dec. 30

Jacksonville, ESPN, 8 p.m., \$990,156.

Sea World Holiday Bowl Dec. 30

San Diego, ESPN, 8 p.m., \$766,870.

Florida Citrus Bowl Jan. 2

Orlando, ABC, Noon, \$1.05 million.

Hall of Fame Bowl Jan. 2

Tampa, 1 p.m. NBC, (\$800,000 to Alabama and \$700,000 to Michigan, as per ticket sales arrangement).

Mobil Cotton Bowl Jan. 2

Dallas, CBS, 1:35 p.m., \$2.5 million.

Orange Bowl Jan. 2

Miami, NBC, 8 p.m., \$2.59 million.

Rose Bowl Jan. 2

Pasadena, ABC, 5 p.m., \$6.13 million.

Sunkist Fiesta Bowl Jan. 2

Tempe, NBC, 5 p.m., \$2.03 million.

USF&G Sugar Bowl Jan. 2

New Orleans, ABC, 3:30 p.m., \$2.7 million.

Bluebonnet Bowl

Houston, suspended for 1989.

FOOTBALL PLAYOFF: THEY JUST SAID NO

The ol' "mythical" national champion of college football will remain just that: mythical. A playoff format instead of the bowl game system is a dead issue as far as the National Collegiate Athletic Association is concerned.

A resolution was written and presented to the NCAA Convention in January 1988, according to Bob Minnix, NCAA staff liaison to the special events committee. "We [the NCAA] asked the representatives of the Division I institutions to vote on the resolution," said Minnix.

The NCAA wanted to know if there was support from college athletic directors, coaches and college presidents for the NCAA to conceive a playoff system.

"The resolution was resoundingly defeated," said Minnix. According to NCAA records the actual vote was 98 to 13, against a playoff, with one abstention.

Though the NCAA can recommend certain ideas and rules to the institutions, it is the institutions that make the final decision via vote. And who could really argue with the outcome?

"The Cotton Bowl will pay out \$2.5 million per team this year," said Jim Brock, executive director of the Cotton Bowl Committee. Though the opponents in the Cotton Bowl will each get the largest cut of its \$2.5 million, other teams in the respective conferences will see some dollars trickle down to them, according to Brock.

Mickey Holmes, the executive director of the Sugar Bowl Committee asked rhetorically, "If schools lose money generated by bowl games [by going to a playoff system] where will the replacement revenue come from that produces \$50 million for the institutions?"

"Not from television revenue—ad dollars have shrunk," said Minnix. "There aren't any television revenues out there. Ratings are flat." That statement is evidenced by the fact that after approximately 32 years NBC will no longer carry the Rose Bowl. In the past two years NBC had lost money. And although NBC still had two years to go on its contract, the Rose Bowl wasn't interested in restructuring the contract agreement at a reduced fee to help NBC, according to Doug Kelly, NBC sports press representative. "It wasn't economically feasible [to continue televising the Rose Bowl]," said Kelly.

The ABC network quickly gobbled it up with a contract calling for a re-

ported \$100 million payment for the rights to carry the game through 1997.

The windfall of dollars is not lost on people involved in the games either. "The Rose Bowl pays so much (over \$6 million per conference) we wouldn't want to turn them away just to find out who is actually No. 1," said Head Coach Hayden Fry, whose Iowa Hawkeyes are a member of the Big Ten, a conference that makes a yearly appearance in the Rose Bowl against the Pac-10.

Fry likes the fact that other sports in the respective schools benefit from the bowl game dollars. "All the youngsters get an opportunity to benefit and participate. It's great revenue and its a great tradition."

"There are just too many negatives [to having a playoff system]," said Jimmy Johnson, head coach of the University of Miami Hurricanes. "It would take away from the relaxed and festive atmosphere of the bowls."

Larry Smith, coach at USC, says a playoff system would only take advantage of the athletes and would make the season much too long. "Who would choose the 18 to 20 teams that would play?" said Smith. "I've read and heard of every different playoff system." Smith said he hasn't found one he would favor.

There are some coaches who favor some type of playoff like Jackie Sherrill of Texas A&M, Joe Paterno of Penn State and Lou Holtz of Notre Dame.

Holtz said a point system should be instituted. Points for wins only against Division I teams and no points for victories over Division II teams. Also, you would get points when a Division I team that you defeated beats another Division I team.

There may be many more "systems" out there, but everyone should keep them to themselves. As the NCAA Committee understands it, the institutions don't want to deal with this playoff system idea again for a long time—as in years—according to Minnix.

But Johnson, speaking to the inevitability of a playoff format said, "because of financial pressure it may be instituted."

Paterno is on record as promoting the possibility of a playoff format: "I don't know if it will happen, but I had three teams that were unbeaten and didn't have a chance to play for the title... I have to say, let's look at it and see if we're not being dinosaurs about it."

—Randy Hurley

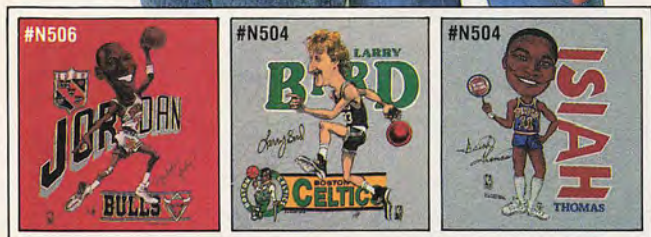
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I remember thinking, "What am I doing here?" It really was not a good place to be swimming: six miles out, in water over 1,000 feet deep, the fishing boat 50 yards away and drifting further, the guys on board oblivious to my exponentially increasing sense of, uh, terror.

The idea had seemed simple enough: just jump in and shoot the fish and get back in the boat. No problema, I assured Ricardo Verdugo, Los Cabos tourism director, when he cast a look of doubt. So I splashed into the very spot where the Sea of Cortez swirls into the Pacific Ocean, with snorkel, mask, power fins and Nikonos, and swam confidently toward a wild marlin hooked on 50-pound test line somewhere out in the endless blue.

In the distance I saw a silvery, undulating torpedo. I swam to within 15 feet of the fish and paused, momentarily marveling at its sheer magnificence. Neon blue and gold bands glistened as its back arched elegantly. I raised the camera, but the sight through the viewfinder shocked me so that, without shooting, I jerked the camera down to confirm my vision. Aggressively tugging at the line, the 200-plus-pound fish was brandishing its rapier-bill in my direction, fully prepared to defend itself against this strange menace.

Great, just great. Everything had been going along wonderfully on this Baja adventure until I decided to take an underwater snapshot of what all of us on the boat thought was a spent fish. On board the *Palmilla Tres*, outfitted for us by Mario Cortés of the Hotel *Palmilla*, we had battled this blue marlin for an hour and pulled him to within 10 feet of the boat. But as the deck hands readied their gaffs, I asked them to hold off while I took the plunge.

This fish, obviously, had other ideas. After issuing his belligerent warning, he took line with a renewed surge of survival instinct and dove out of sight into the sunlight-latticed depths below me.

I popped to the surface,

spit out the snorkel and screamed to Mario and Ricardo to pull the fish back. They didn't hear me for the *Palmilla Tres* had drifted an alarming distance during my brief tête-à-tête with the marlin. I could see Ricardo reeling desperately, but I had no idea where the marlin was. I looked down again, and all around. Blue nothingness.

Good-sized swells, kicked up by a distant Pacific hurricane, lifted me up, almost as high as the bridge of the *Pal-*

ning to get the picture. I could be the appetizer for a squadron of hammerheads or makos before they dined on marlin. That is, unless I wound up aerated by the hooked fish itself. What a way to end a trip to Baja. I tried to remember if my life insurance included being eaten.

Power fins, do your thing, I commanded. Matt Biondi had nothing on me as I darted like a batfish back to the boat, slowing only to take

could fight no more.

I had hoped there would be no end. A growing and welcome tradition among billfishermen these days is to catch and release, but the guys on board insisted that we take this one back. "For what?" I asked. "To eat," they replied.

That night I dined on fresh marlin for the first time. Prepared exquisitely, sashimi-style (marinated raw) by the Hotel *Palmilla* chef, it was nothing less than a fantastic way to end my first day of Baja marlin fishing, made even more satisfying by my thankfulness to be the consumer of the bounty of the sea rather than the consumer.

Los Cabos! The Capes. This is where the world ends, and the fishing begins. Fifty miles south of the Tropic of Cancer, where the old Spanish galleons took their last pause before braving the three-month voyage to the Orient, the two friendly villages of San Jose del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas share lordship over their rich local waters. Waters many claim to be the richest in the world.

I'm here to try for marlin, though less glamorous but equally exciting gamefish such as tuna, dorado, wahoo, roosterfish, swordfish, sailfish and shark are also plentiful. But marlin is king. And the ultimate goal of all fishermen is to land a "grander," a marlin weighing over 1,000 pounds.

I have come to Los Cabos to catch a grander. Why? Because they're out there. And it is one of the great thrills in life to pit one's own muscle and endurance and will power against that of one of the deep's strongest and most formidable denizens.

Or so I had been told. I'm no expert fisherman. B.C. (Before Cabo) I had never caught a marlin. I caught a sailfish off Puerto Vallarta once, and before that a big carp in a pond. Not much of an angling resume. But in

Hoping to earn a slab of marlin meat, villagers hoist a 10-foot, 223-pound blue for inspection.

BEFORE CABO



ABE CUANANG



SPORT OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

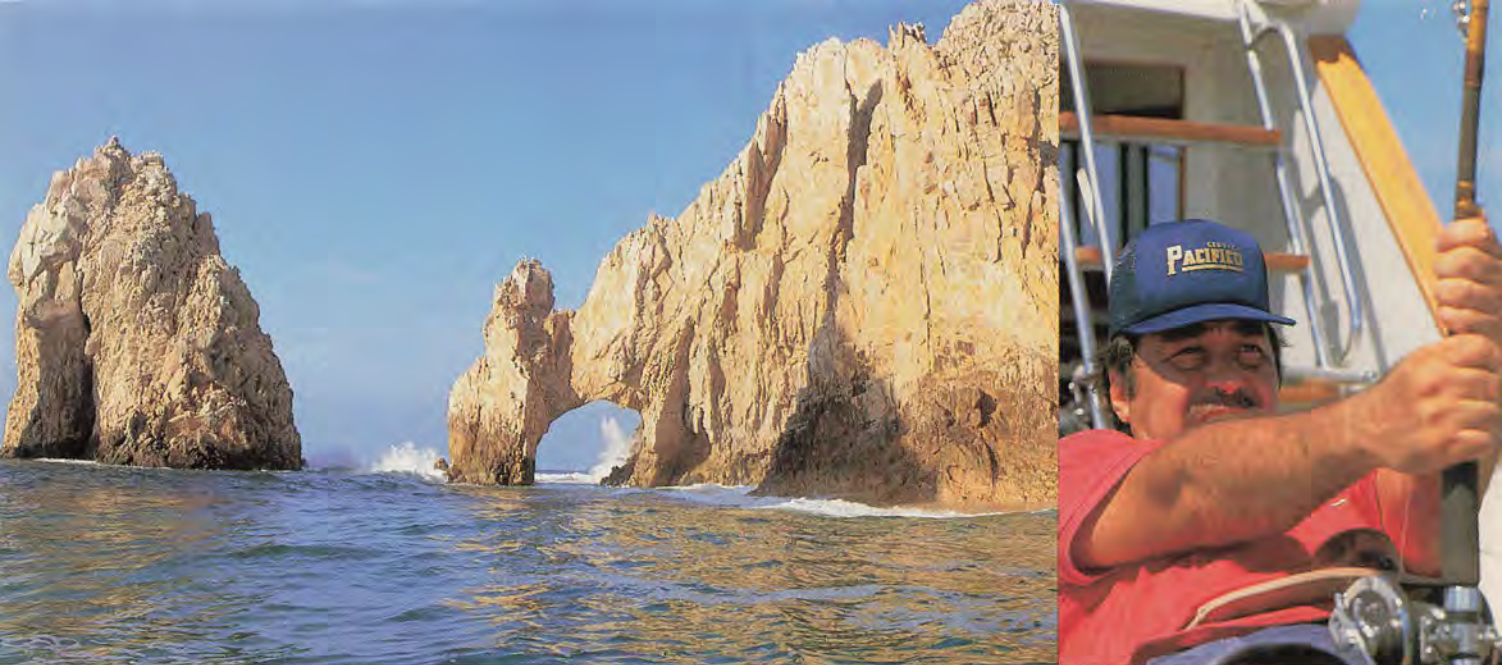
BY RUSSELL R. HOLSTER JR.

milla Tres in the distance, and down again. As I dangled in suspension, an ominous realization came over me: I had entered the food chain in one of the most bountiful big gamefish habitats in the world. Here I was, a spindly, red-meated morsel cavorting with a marlin which at this precise moment was sending out struggling distress signals to every shark within 50 miles. I was begin-

an occasional glance below for Jaws or that horned guardian of the swimstep.

The boat angled back toward me, and I finally made contact with the *Tres* and clambered on deck. It took nearly another hour for the crew to get the fish back up and on board. He was a fighter to the end. From the swimstep, I watched underwater as he took his last dive, and then, exhausted, he





El Arco and its granite companions signal Land's End at Cabo San Lucas.

Marlin in sight, tourism official Ricardo Verdugo struggles to end a two-hour battle.

Baja, even we, shall we say, "irregular" fishermen have a shot at the bigtime.

A good shot. If you hang around Cabo for a little while, you're going to catch a marlin. It's a given. The fish we caught the first day weighed in at 223 pounds and was 10-feet long. Not a bad start. But there was more to come.

From the sea, San Jose del Cabo looks like Shangri-la. Small, conical hills along the coast serve as forward sentries for the lofty mountains, including 2,000-meter Picacho de San Lázaro, piercing the clouds several miles to the north. But up close, it is a kaleidoscope of barrenness, with rock, cactus and the very bleached-bone soil itself braided into a forboding panorama.

The beauty of the rearguard misty mountains notwithstanding, the gaze of Los Cabos is fixed seaward. Like all capes, there is a little magic to Los Cabos. Magic that springs only from the sea, which in Baja comes with a full complement of crashing waves, sculpted rocks, dizzying sunsets, pelicans, sea lions and great fish. For two days following the first marlin adventure I lolled at the lovely Hotel Palmilla just outside of San Jose, recovering from a rather nasty little sunburn, listening to Ricardo exuberantly explain the Mexican Tourism Department's development plans for the entire area, sipping frozen tequila sunrises, consuming vast quantities of the freshest and most delectable seafood anyone other than a commercial fisherman could ever hope for, and trying to

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VERN UYETAKE

analyze the exact nature of that magic. I failed. It can be seen and felt, but never wholly captured. And so I simply surrendered to its relaxing and rehabilitative spell.

Twenty-five miles west by southwest of San Jose lies bustling Cabo San Lucas, more commercial than its bigger but quieter rival. Snuggled at the very tip of the peninsula, where a cluster of granite spires and the beautiful wave-carved arch, "El Arco," signal Land's End, CSL is the port of call for the cruise ships that ply the Mexican coast, and also the home of the largest sportfishing fleet along the North American Pacific.

I arranged to go out with the Pisces Charter Fleet, one of the best according to Bob Sarber, senior editor of *Petersen's Fishing* magazine. Aboard the Tracy Ann, we headed back to the same waters which were productive for us before. Trolling six day-glo artificial lures, we snagged a wahoo that put up a short but spirited fight. The cylinder-like, oversized salt water version of a pike weighed in at about 25 pounds. Not 30 minutes later, we hooked a dorado, known on the East Coast as a dolphinfish and in Hawaii as mahi-mahi. The 10-pound, lime green bugger held his own during a five-minute struggle.

Wahoo and dorado, good eating, but still no marlin. I had about given up on getting one this day out when suddenly line began screaming off one of the reels. About 20 yards astern we could see bill, fins and tail thrashing in the waves. Marlin! The Tracy Ann captain threw the throttle wide open and the boat lunged forward, setting the hook. Now we let the fish run, and run he did, 100 yards out, maybe further. It seemed like a mile when at last he jumped. Out on the horizon, at a position incongruent with the angle of the line, he broke the surface in a series of brilliant leaps, his

slashing, dark contour the epicenter of a cascading eruption of splashes that flashed like sea diamonds in the sun. Again and again he jumped, as if searching for the unfathomable enemy who would impose such a cruel discretion against this high prince of the Pacific.

Finally, he jumped no more, and I began the task of bringing him in. Pulling the rod, releasing, reeling. Pulling, releasing, reeling. Somewhere off in the distance, he was pulling back. I'd reel 10 inches, he'd take back 10, 15, 20. I notice little imperfections on the line, discolorations and such, points of reference. I reel them on to the spool and watch as he pulls them out and into the water again. This fish is strong. He seems to be just hovering out there, holding his end of the line like a mule refusing to be led further. He does not run, thankfully, because he has more than three-quarters of the line off the reel already; another big run and I would lose him. The line is very taut. I cannot pull back too hard or risk breaking it. Ten minutes and my arms are getting very tired. Twenty minutes and every pull back on the rod is a chore. The rod shakes as I attempt to reel.

Now I'm gaining on him, slowly. The imperfections spool onto the reel, and he can only pull them out to the end of the rod, and then I roll them back and, one by one, they disappear into the tightly wound spool of translucent green line, now growing larger. I'm halfway there, and he is tiring. The jumping took its toll; he won't last as long as the first marlin, which did not jump. Still he perseveres; not a single yard of line comes uncontested.

It's 2 o'clock, the unforgiving Baja sun blasting down in the heat of the day. I'm sweating, my hands are blistering, my arms ache, my sunburn flaming as if I'd been dipped in acid. And the fish is



Held firmly by its bill, another marlin is gently revived before being released to fight again.

Clouds over the mountains lend an air of fantasy to San Jose del Cabo and its parched beaches.

still fighting. Thirty minutes, 40 minutes, but it can't be long now, the spool is almost full again.

And then, there he is, a gray shadow astern. I pull the final few feet of line in, until the steel leader line can be grasped by the first mate. Only then can I relax. Stiffly, I stagger to the railing to get a close-up view of my sparring partner. Held securely by his bill, the fish returns my stare, both of us overcome by that weird combination of exhilarated exhaustion. He's a little smaller than the first marlin, but easily over 200 pounds, and equally as handsome. The first mate asks if I want to keep him. No. This was not the fish I came for. We held him for a moment until he completely revived, then let him go. As delicious as the other marlin was, that feast could not compare with the gratification of watching this beautiful creature slip back into the prop wash of the Tracy Ann, and with a groggy swoosh of its midnight blue tail, dive to deep, dark sanctuary.

That was the last marlin I caught. The next day I went out with another expert crew on the Solmar Dos. Six hours we trolled through the swells of the Pacific, from just beyond the old lighthouse, over the rich San Jaime banks, and across the horizon, out of sight of land for the first time. But no wahoo, no dorado, no marlin. It just goes to show that even in Cabo, the sea assures nothing.

Our excellent host and resident historian in CSL, Luis Bulnes of the Solmar Hotel, felt bad that we had caught nada.

But his concern was unwarranted. The ride through the Pacific was reward in itself, especially since it came with a free exhibition by a troupe of dancing porpoises, seemingly eager to lift the spirits of we lonely mariners. Their performance only punctuated the philosophy espoused by a sticker slapped on the cabin door of the Solmar Dos: "The worst day fishing is better than the best day working." Salud!

The time to go fishing in Cabo is now. As they always have been, the fish are still plentiful. And airfare, hotels and fishing charters are reasonable. But change has swept through Los Cabos, and more, possibly much more, is on the way. Someday, Ricardo explained as he pointed toward the perfectly wonderful, perfectly empty beaches between San Jose del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas, there will be hotels all along here; it will be one big city from Land's End to San Jose; the land is already sold.

Hopefully, it will take a long, long time before that occurs. I like it the way it is, and oldtimers say it was even better back when. Now anglers are only part of an increasingly diverse mix of Baja-bound travelers, though still the most important part, as Cabo trolls for other tourist species, honeymooners, sun-worshippers, jet-setters and the like. Whether Cabo can ever successfully compete with more "sophisticated" resorts such as Acapulco, Puerto Vallarta, Cancun, not to mention Hawaii and the Caribbean, is debatable. But as long as there are the big fish, Los Cabos will never lack for visitors.

However, even its most dependable resource is threatened. Not by sportfishermen. Especially if the custom of catching and releasing is elevated to religious tradition, sportfishermen will not deplete Baja's great fish. But on the coast between San Jose and CSL, lies the rot-

ting carcass of a ship thrown to the rocks by a resentful sea 20 years or so ago. It was a Japanese long-liner, which to this day continue to prowl, legally and illegally, Mexican waters near Los Cabos and beyond. Trailing cables 75 miles long, baited with oily herring on hooks every 10 yards, these ships can wipe out entire populations of fish as they slowly churn over feeding banks.

In a time long ago and far away, the world seemed infinite, with the oceans the most dramatic element of that boundlessness. It simply is not so anymore. The only thing that seems infinite today is humankind's capacity for overwhelming the natural ecosystem. Hidden at the end of the world and garri-soned behind its stark desert parapets, it is easy to believe that Cabo might escape, but as the rusted Japanese wreck proves, the long, plundering tentacles of human voracity and shortsightedness reach even here. As always, there is trouble in paradise.

I'm thinking about this and more as I sit in the cafe at the Solmar Hotel sipping a cold Pacifico, admiring the record billfish, including a 950-pound blue marlin, hanging stuffed above me. And it dawns on me that maybe I did catch my grander. I just caught him a few years too soon. I let him go. He's out there still, somewhere before Cabo. Living. Swimming. Growing. With a little luck, we may both survive to duel again.

I tip my bottle toward the two seas surging beyond the rocks of Land's End. As the setting Baja sun splashes red-gold over the harbor mercado, the anchored fishing fleet, and the Royal Princess cruise ship steaming out of Cabo San Lucas Bay headed for Mazatlan, I think I spot a leaping marlin on the orange horizon. Or maybe it was my imagination. Or maybe it was magic. It's hard to tell in a place like this. ★



A large background photograph of Chicago Bears players in action on the field. The players are wearing their iconic blue helmets with the red 'C' logo and black jerseys with red and white stripes on the sleeves. One player in the foreground is wearing jersey number 24. The action is intense, with players tackling each other.

DITKA'S BAD NEWS BEARS WHAT'S NEXT?

OUT FROM UNDER
THEIR SUPER BOWL
CLOUD, THE BEARS
ARE HAVING FUN
AGAIN AS
"UNDERDOGS"

By Kevin Lamb

It's not quite true that the Chicago Bears walked out of their grave this year. The Bears don't walk anywhere. They barge. They leave doors swinging behind them. They flick cigar ashes on the rug. They loudly wake the baby, and they rowdily break the glassware. If you don't like it, they'll fight anyone in the house. Even without seven of last year's starters, a group that included six No. 1 draft picks and five who had been to the Pro Bowl.

Losing those players staggered the Bears a little, about as much as a ball peen hammer to an elephant's forehead. The blow looked worse at the time, though. Some teams don't even *have* that much talent, let alone lose it in one year. No wonder so many people saw this year as the end of the Bears' four-year reign in the NFC Central Division. "We had some doubts, too," safety Dave Duerson said. "A lot of changes took place."

Even worse, while the Bears were growing older and thinner, the Minnesota Vikings were growing up. They'd nearly gone to the Super Bowl last year, and now they were tracking the Bears like an uppity, young western gunslinger. The first chance they had, three weeks into the season, the Vikings shot the Bears down 31-7 in a hail of Tommy Kramer's bullets.

"The torch has passed," Coach Mike Ditka told reporters

BRIAN DRAKE

with a straight face the next day. "It's almost a foregone conclusion that we're going for a wild card right now, and I don't think there's any other way to look at it. I'm serious. I don't know what you're laughing at. They're so much superior, it's unbelievable."

He didn't mean it, of course. Two weeks later, the Vikings fell to Miami while the Bears were beating undefeated Buffalo, and Chicago had first place to itself again. "I think it's going to go down to the last game of the season," Duerson said of the Monday night finale December 19.

The way the Bears saw it, the pundits played right into their hands. They take things that personally. They didn't stop to think maybe a lot of people picked the Vikings because they were a young team on the rise while the Bears were losing a third of their lineup. They took it as a personal insult. Those wiseapples in the media would probably call their mothers names, too, if they got the chance.

In case any of the players didn't feel offended, Ditka gave them a nudge. He likes to keep the wagons circled. He even admitted it was probably better that the Vikings were pre-season favorites. "That gives me a way to work, lets me work my game," Ditka said.

His game is defiance, and it had been hard to defy the barrage of rose petals blowing the Bears' way since 1985, their Super Bowl season. He kept telling them to put a chip on their shoulders, but adoring fans kept slapping their backs and knocking it off. They softened. The glare of television lights melted their sneers into beauty pageant smiles. A personal insult was just what they needed, more even than Wilber Marshall and Willie Gault.

"We have something to prove again," said defensive tackle Dan Hampton, who got off to perhaps the best start of his fine career.

"It gave us an underdog mentality," linebacker Mike Singletary said. "We kept hearing, 'You lost this guy, you lost that guy. You're not going to be able to do this or that.'" The best way to get the Bears to do something always was to tell them they couldn't.

It became more fun trying to prove people wrong than trying to prove it was right for them to win every game 44-0. "The pressure's off us and we're having fun," wide receiver Dennis McKinnon said.

"Last year, we were still playing under a cloud all the time," Hampton said. "A Super Bowl cloud. This year, we don't have that. Some legends are gone. It's almost like a new outlook, a new understanding. We're not the No. 1 team anymore. We were always up there, repelling charges, and that gets old.

"Now we're just the Bears, and we



The Bears lost a legend in Walter Payton, but Neal Anderson was a proven player just waiting for a chance.

can go about being the No. 1 team again. I'm more excited about this team than any team I've ever been on. The attitude's so good."

For a while, the Bears even thought their new humility would shield them from the controversies that have followed them the last few years like flies circling a garbage truck. Training camp was even pretty quiet. William Perry missed four weeks to get treatment for his eating disorder, but no circus tents

were pitched upon his return. Quarterback Jim McMahon even made it to all the practices, a personal record in his bloodstained career.

These were the Bears, though. Them? Quiet? Does Cher wear blue jeans? Does Mike Tyson take up the flute? If the Bears went to the theater, the actors would pull up chairs and watch *them*.

It started when Richard Dent was the 17th NFL player suspended under the drug policy. Naturally, he fought it. He

BRIAN DRAKE

hadn't flunked a drug test, he just had refused to take one. And naturally, he made the league back down. Pretty soon, Ditka and McMahon were saying the receivers were better this year with first-round rookie Wendell Davis than they'd been a year ago with Gault's world-class speed. Offensive coordinator Ed Hughes, who normally doesn't stir up any more dirt than a lamppost, said the offensive linemen were paid like Cadillacs but playing like Fords. Ditka ordered a long pass in the last minute of a 24-6 victory, after the Packers had called two timeouts. And all along, Ditka was all but saying "Nyah, nyah, nyah" in a running feud with reporters.

"The Bears can't even survive without conflict," Singletary finally realized. "Without conflict, we're not the Bears."

It deflected attention from the 11 rookies on their opening-day roster, filling holes from the exodus that had begun when they lost their second straight first-round playoff game last season. Walter Payton and safety Gary Fencik retired. Marshall jumped to Washington for more money. Safety Todd Bell and his \$525,000 salary were cut. Gault's holdout precipitated a trade to the Raiders. Linebacker Otis Wilson's knee injury knocked him out for the season. Perry and tackle Jimbo Covert were lost with

injuries for most of the season, if not all of it.

The Bears still fielded a team. These guys had gone 38-6 in union games since 1985, the NFL's third-best three-year record since 1932. They hadn't done it by filling their bench out of the classifieds. At four of the seven positions—halfback, safety, linebacker and defensive end—Neal Anderson, Shaun Gayle, Ron Rivera and Al Harris were proven players just waiting for openings. The team actually might have improved at those spots and wide receiver, where Davis, McKinnon, Dennis Gentry and Ron Morris gave the Bears two platoons.

That left only right linebacker and left tackle as trouble spots. Nobody claimed Jim Morrissey and John Wojciechowski were carbons of Marshall and Covert, but they held their own. "You'd be surprised how other people can pick you up if you give them a chance to play," Ditka said. "We play as a team. We don't care about which linebacker's hurt and which one isn't." There's always someone to step in.

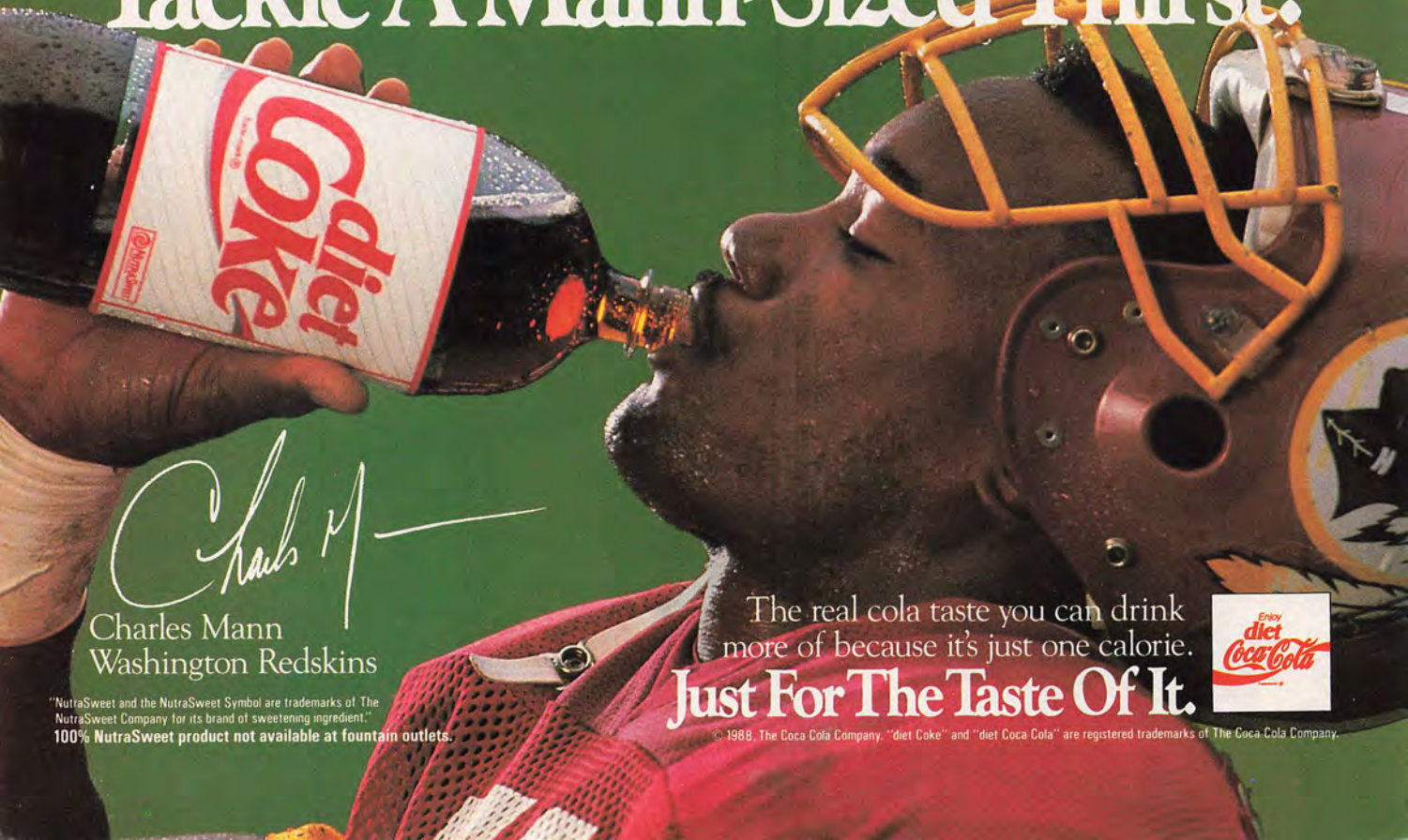
Injuries were unavoidable, but it disturbed fans to see the Bears lose two stars to greener dollars. Letting Gault and Marshall get away, first-round picks at the peak of their careers, wasn't that



BRIAN DRAKE

In a defense peppered with new faces, Super Bowl MVP Richard Dent is still a prowling Bear.

Tackle A Mann-Sized Thirst.



Charles M.

Charles Mann
Washington Redskins

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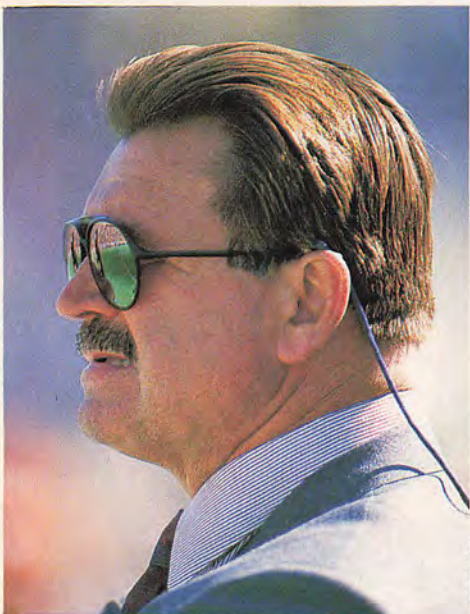
Just For The Taste Of It.



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Despite early resistance, the Bears breezed past the Dolphins 34-7 in the season opener, avenging '85's only loss.



RON VESLEY

Baddest Bear Ditka claims to be playing for a wild card.

like giving up on this year?

Not necessarily. The Bears didn't win four straight division titles by treating each year in a vacuum. They plan. With five defensive starters near or past 30, they had to give the future some thought. Gault's and Marshall's positions

were the strongest on the team at the times they left. Yes, they were at their peaks, but football players rarely improve after their fifth seasons. Even if they don't go downhill right away, they're not far from the age where their rising cost and declining production cross paths on a graph.

The Bears managed to get back as much for Gault and Marshall as they'd spent to draft them, maybe even more. They got halves of two excellent careers for virtually nothing. That's how a team stays on top. And besides, Ditka always has gotten more out of young players than veterans who can recite his motivational ploys under their breath. "He knows how to get players that he can keep motivated," Hampton said. "He has players that like challenges."

The turnover hit the defense hardest, and this was a unit that finished ahead of just two teams in touchdown passes allowed in last year's union games. Only four teams made fewer interceptions. The nickel defense was so shaky, opponents had to consider falling down on second down to set themselves up with a sure-thing third-and-eight.

"We knew it was going to be tougher than when we had a ton of talent and experience," Duerson said. That might have been the problem last year, defen-

sive coordinator Vince Tobin said. They thought it was going to be too easy. "When you have the same 11 guys playing together for three or four years, you have a tendency to feel you can turn it on whenever you want to," Tobin said.

McKinnon, always more blunt, said, "I think some guys slacked off last year."

"When you have a lot of talent," Singletary said, "you say, 'We can beat anybody.' Sometimes you forget the small things. When some of that talent leaves, you look around and say, 'Hey, we can't afford to make any mistakes.' It makes you realize you have to get back to basics. You kick and scratch and do whatever it takes."

Early in the season, the Bears had NFL leads in all four main defensive stats: points, total yards, passing yards and rushing yards. They were stopping three out of four third-down plays. "It's surprising that they're playing so well in spite of all the players they've lost," Buffalo coach Marv Levy said. "Someone picks up the flag and they keep on marching."

A big difference was the players and Tobin finally were comfortable with each other. They didn't exactly roll their eyes at Tobin's system the first two years, but there seemed to be a subtle resistance to throwing themselves into the

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Denver Broncos

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THIS MONTH'S DODGE SPORT WORD PUZZLE SOLVED.



NEXT MONTH IN SPORT SUPER BOWL GAME PLAN

new way, perhaps for fear of washing away past glory.

"I think there's a little truth to that," linebacker Ron Rivera said. "We won the Super Bowl the year before Vince came. He was relatively young. He was new in the NFL." Comparisons with the past were inevitable. Tobin's predecessor, Eagle coach Buddy Ryan, was the guy defensive players carried off the field after the Super Bowl.

"You can go weeks and weeks now without hearing Buddy's schemes or his name mentioned," Hampton said. "He was still a ghost last year. But I think Bill Murray came through and we slimed it."

As Tobin's schemes became second nature, the defense progressed to the point of fooling offenses. Just overpowering them didn't always work last year. Opponents often knew what to expect from the way they lined up.

"There wasn't much guesswork on the part of the offense," Duerson said, blaming the players more than Tobin. "This year, we have a lot of coverages that go together. From one alignment, we're able to move into three or four different coverages."

The Bears did that all game in the opener against Miami. They'd line up one way, let Dan Marino call an audible to beat that defense, then shift into the defense that would stop Marino's audible. Exasperated, Marino had his fewest completions and lowest yardage as an NFL starter. "Marino was mad," safety Shaun Gayle said. "He was yelling at his linemen. He couldn't get anything going."

With McMahon healthy, the offense was prepared to carry the defense for a change. Quarterback coach Greg Landry took over the play calling, and McMahon liked it. "He's been a quarterback," McMahon said. "He knows the situations. He knows how to call plays. He called them for a long time."

He had the balance to keep opponents guessing and the depth to keep his troops fresh. On opening day, the Bears made a long touchdown drive with six players who hadn't started the game. Anderson and Thomas Sanders shared Payton's old load about 70-30. With a combined 100-yards-a-game pace through five weeks, despite two games that produced only 110 yards, they put the Bears back on top in NFL rushing and helped keep the defense off the field for all but 23 minutes a game.

The passing game came alive against Buffalo. "Sometimes I don't let us attack enough," Ditka said after the Bears passed on nine of their first 13 first downs and put the 24-3 victory away by halftime. "I think we've got to attack. I think we've got to believe we can protect the quarterback and throw it."

The Buffalo game might have been

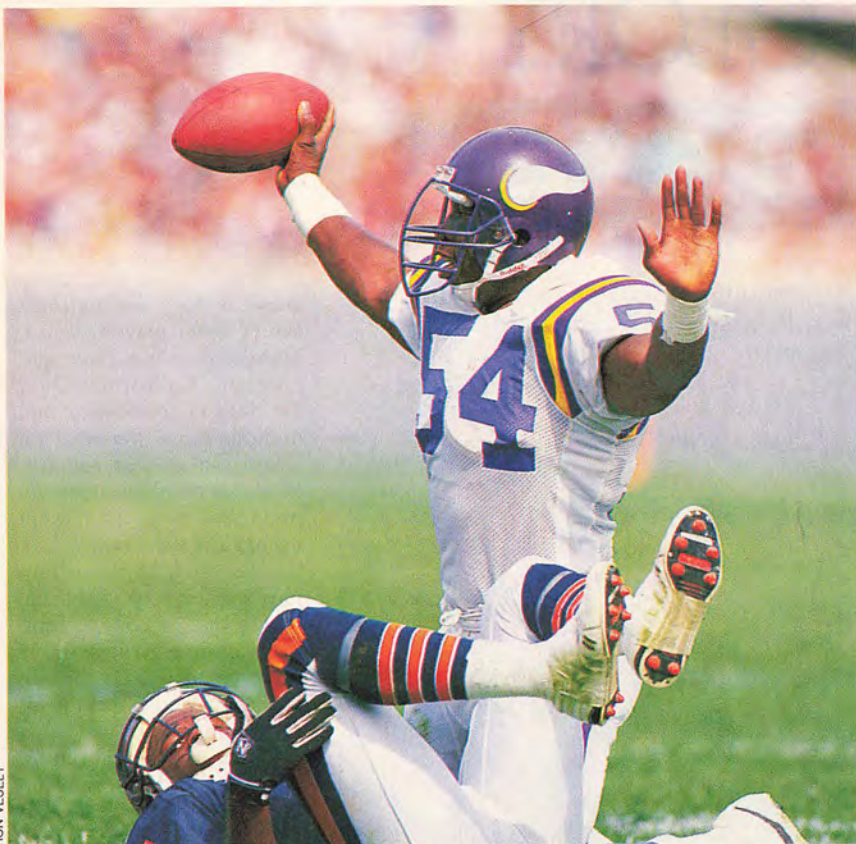


Finally, defensive coordinator Vince Tobin has the Bears believing in his system.



Riddled by Tommy Kramer in September, the Bears expect a winner-take-all rematch in December.

the Bears' most important victory since 1985. They had come into the season with just one win in their last eight games against teams that finished with winning records, and their loss to Minnesota was the only game against a winning team so far this year. The other games were locks. The Bears had won 33 straight against those teams. But those teams don't show up in the playoffs. Buffalo gave the Bears another point to prove. It was their way of sending a "We've Gotten Well" card out



RON VESELY

Jesse Solomon and the Vikings upended the Bears in their first meeting this year.

around the league.

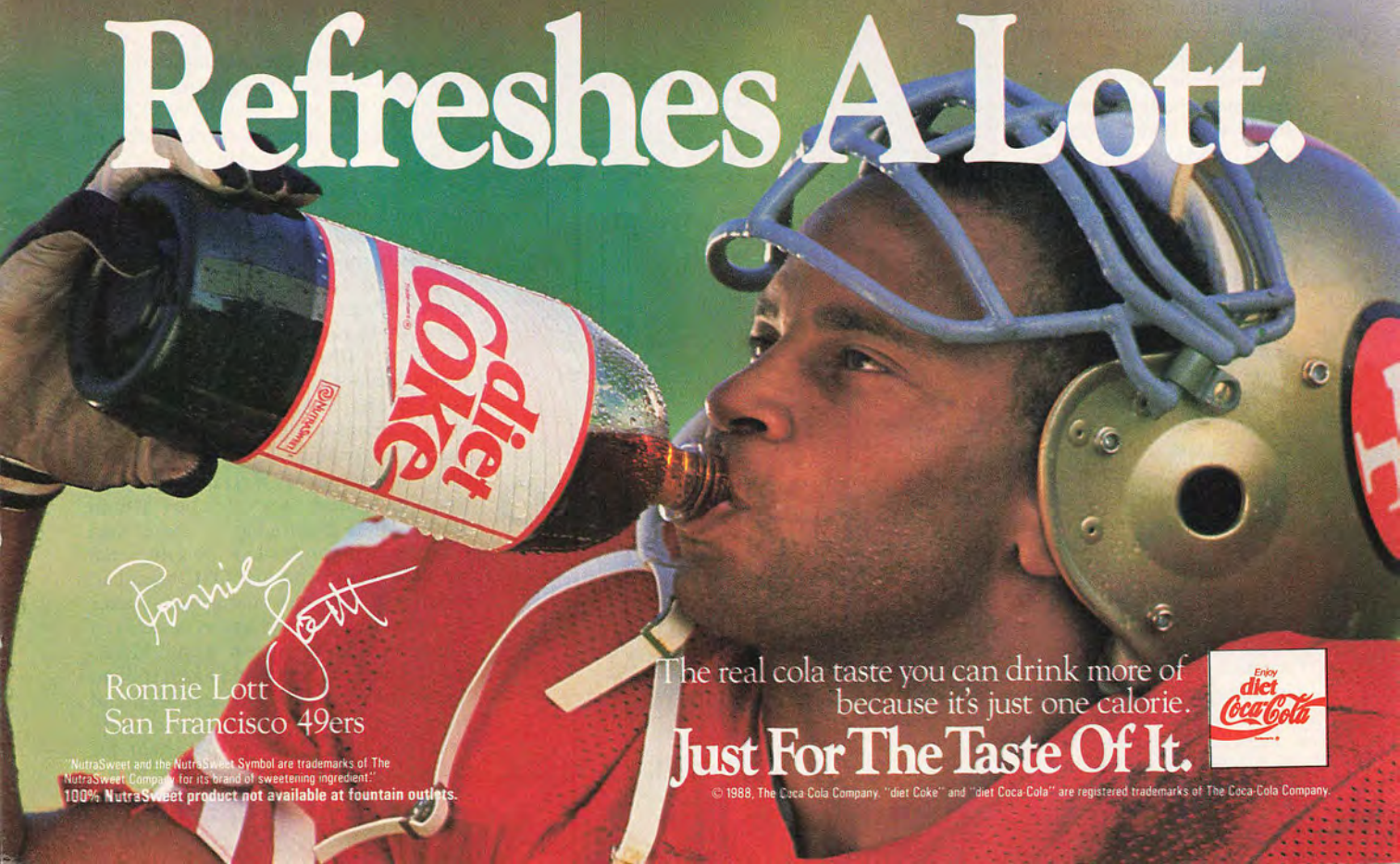
The defense attacked Buffalo, too. It was the second straight week the Bears made at least five sacks, a figure they'd reached only twice in their previous 12 games. They held the Bills to zero yards on the ground. They weren't yet barking at opponents again, but their bite was back. "We've been the No. 1 defense since God told Noah to look for rain," Hampton reminded.

There were clouds on the horizon. The defense was still thinner than tracing paper, and the pass blocking remained iffy. McMahon hadn't suddenly sprouted armor. There would be some ugly, close games against some ugly, losing teams. But as Singletary said, "It's not supposed to be pretty. That's why we wear helmets."

Bear football always was about as subtle as a bomb threat. It's hard not to hear their footsteps, whether across the field or in the standings. And it only makes the exploding more fun if everyone turns their backs to them.

"I like being the underdog for a change," Dent said. "I hope people keep saying it. Because really, it just pisses me off when the game comes." Same old Bears. They came back before they ever really left. They just stepped out to sharpen their rough edges. ★

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GLORY DAYS

On a brisk, biting and excessively boisterous autumn day in 1967 along the banks of the Olentangy River, a college football practice scrimmage was underway. It could have been like any other of hundreds of such scrimmages, except that this one involved perhaps Ohio State's best team. Not the varsity. The freshmen. Some say the greatest freshman class ever.

A heralded rookie halfback cradled a varsity punt at his 38. Running left, he paused as the veteran giants converged. He spun right, pirouetted, reversed his field a dozen times, eventually running 319 yards to cover the 68 needed to return the punt for a touchdown. All 11 varsity players had at least one crack at him, some got a double-take. The frosh's romp into the end zone prompted the unrestrained cheers of varsity, freshmen, the horde of sidelines who always frequent OSU practices, and everyone else in attendance.

All except one, that is. Livid with rage, Coach Woody Hayes bellowed a halt to the proceedings and laid down the Law of Woody in full volume. "Son, when you get the football in your hands, you head straight for the goalposts. You run north or south, never east or west. Don't ever forget it."

Shaking his head in bewilderment, freshman halfback Jack Tatum, the prize from Passaic, New Jersey, who ran for 1,421 yards as a high school senior, shuffled to the sidelines, banished forever from offensive action.

Crazy like a fox, maybe, was Woody Hayes. Exiled to defense, Tatum a year later became the textbook open-side cornerback, the most intimidating, terrorizing influence on the 1968 Buckeye team—a team of great expectations that, in almost Hollywood fashion, fulfilled the impossible dream.

Fast-forward now. Pasadena. January 1, 1969. For the second time in Rose



JIM CLAUS

Bowl history the nation's No. 1 team played No. 2. Unbeatens, Ohio State and Southern California. Over 100,000 in attendance, and millions more watching on television as that remarkable class of athletes, just sophomores even then, went up against the mighty Trojans and their Heisman Trophy winner, O.J. Simpson. It was one of college football's all-time greatest show-downs, and the last hurrah of the Big Ten as a cradle of champions.

The team that ran out into the bright California sun that New Year's Day was one that the legendary Hayes proclaimed the very best of his 28 at Ohio State. Indeed, the team that started 13 of those sophomores, and finished with a 10-0 record and the No. 1 ranking in the country, had it all. Not simply Tatum, the tight-lipped, iron-fisted defensive executioner. And not just "Sexy Remy" Kern, the sophomore quarterback whose big-play running and passing generalship infected

the entire team with an aura of invincibility. Not just the rest of those rambunctious sophomore superstars.

It had a 185-pound defensive end named Dave Whitfield, the catalyst of the 1968 Buckeyes' remarkable defense. It had two All-America senior tackles in Rufus Mayes and Dave Foley, who lent stability and direction to an explosive, diverse offense. It had an unlikely pear-shaped junior fullback in Jim Otis, hardly in the mold of Woody's tank-like, thunder-footed ramrods, but a man whose blind determination more than compensated for his lack of substantial physical talent. And that OSU team had a deposed two-year quarterback starter named Billy Long and an overshadowed sub soph quarterback in Ron "Mace" Maciejowski who time and again rode to the rescue of team leader and firebrand Kern. Such off-the-bench heroics were necessary because Rex's penchant for the sensational was matched only by his

20
YEARS AGO
THE OHIO STATE
BUCKEYES WON THE
BIG TEN'S LAST
NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIP.

BY KAYE W. KESSLER

knack for getting himself knocked out of commission every other play, game or week.

But as outstanding as the team now seems in retrospect, the 1968 squad started innocently enough. It was ranked 15th in preseason polls, a respectable but hardly regal position. At the start of the 1968 season, all eyes were on the nation's top-ranked team, Big Ten juggernaut Purdue.

The Buckeyes opened with Southern Methodist, and Kern & Co. breezed to a 35-14 romp. The defense showed it could deflect the most concentrated aerial attack, intercepting five of Chuck Hixson's strikes as the SMU quarterback unleashed a record 69 passes, completing 37 for 417 yards.

The 21-6 second game victory over Oregon was a defensive gem as the Bucks held the Ducks to a paltry 140 yards total offense, while Ohio State racked up 456.

There would be other majestic games that year, but it was Ohio State's clash with No. 1 ranked Purdue in game three that caused the nation to sit up and take notice of these Buckeyes. Waxed the year before, 41-6 in Ohio Stadium, the Buckeyes hoped their squadron of sophs could make a difference against Purdue's brilliant backfield combo of halfback Leroy Keyes and quarterback Mike Phipps.

They did. OSU's defense devoured the Boilermakers. Tatum dogged Keyes' every move, as Leroy wound up with 19 yards on seven carries. Sophomore middle guard Jim Stillwagon led the blitz of Phipps. The Purdue Heisman Trophy candidate was rushed off his feet, hit but 10 of 28 for 106 yards, was sacked six times and intercepted twice. One of those pickoffs was returned for a 35-yard TD by Ted Provost, and the other, by Stillwagon, set up a 14-yard "broken play" TD run by Long, the senior QB reclaimed from the bone pile when Kern sprained an ankle.

Remember OSU 45, Northwestern 21, homecoming and the sticky Wildcats matching the Buckeyes 14-14 in the second quarter? But Kern was afire, nailing 8 of 14 for 170 passing yards, including a 72-yard strike to tight end Jan White and a 23-yarder to Bruce Jankowski for TDs, and adding 121 rushing yards in 20 carries, including a 7-yard TD dash.

Recall OSU 31, Illinois 24, the thriller in Champaign? Kern ran for two touchdowns, Otis one, and Jim Roman kicked

a field goal as OSU ran up a 24-0 half-time lead. But the Illini rallied to tie with three TDs and three improbable two-point conversions. The home folks thought an upset was in the making when Kern was again kayoed. But in came Maciejowski, completing his only two passes of the game, the biggest a 44-yarder to Larry Zelina that set up Otis' last-second touchdown for the victory.

Back in Columbus, the Bucks 25, Michigan State 20. Exciting, but not that close as Kern and Mace found Jankowski eight times for 88 yards and a score and Maciejowski ran one in, then left it to Whitfield and the defense to preserve it in the fourth quarter. Kern exits for the fourth time in six games, with a bum ankle this time.

Maciejowski gets his first start and goes wild at Wisconsin in a 43-8 rout, rushing for 124 yards and three TDs in 23 carries, hitting 13 of 19 for another 120 yards, including a touchdown dart to Zelina, who caught eight for 153 yards.

Another nail-bitter at Iowa, but OSU holds on 33-27 as Kern returns to action, rushing for two touchdowns. Otis adds two more and John Brockington one. The defense throttles the versatile Hawk tailback Ed Podolak, who gains only 45 ground yards after piling up 286 the week before.

And then, standing at 9-0 and ranked No. 1 in the nation, there was just one more hurdle barring the Ohio State Buckeyes from the Rose Bowl. As usual, Michigan.

Ranked No. 4, the Wolverines represented OSU's sternest challenge since the Purdue game. But the Buckeyes and the "new" Woody proved more than Michigan could handle.

New Woody? The year 1968 was when Hayes junked his patented fullback left and fullback right, 3 yards and a cloud of dust philosophy. He yielded to the inventiveness of Kern, the speed of Jankowski, Zelina, White, Brockington and Leophus Hayden, and the paralyzing defense led by Tatum, Stillwagon, soph linebacker Doug Adams and Whitfield and senior Mark Stier. It was the year a sophomore quarterback, not Woody, called the plays. Oregon athletic director Len Casanova was prompted to remark, "I wonder what happened to Woody. I remember him telling me, 'I'm not going to let some 19-year-old kid play with my job.' And I hear he's even using the forward pass."

Against Michigan, a 14-14 knot just before halftime was untied by an 86-yard Buckeye march, capped by one of Otis' four touchdowns. He would finish with 143 yards. The Bucks went on from there to post 29 unanswered points, blasting the Wolverines 50-14.

OSU's second half blanking of Michigan was punctuated by Tatum's intimidation of Dennis Brown and Ron Johnson. Tatum separated Wolverine quarterback Brown from the ball on the very first series, and later chased down Johnson, preventing a touchdown by the team's scoring leader and a man who had rushed for over 300 yards the week before. Ron eventually settled for 91 yards against the Buckeyes.

And so the Ohio State Buckeyes journeyed to Pasadena to play out their fate.

Some remember the 1969 Rose Bowl as the Battle of Nos. 32. Simpson vs. Tatum. The unstoppable vs. the unmovable.

In O.J., Tatum met his match. Simpson won the personal battle as the Heisman Trophy winner racked up 171 yards, including 80 on a reverse. But Tatum and the Buckeyes won the war.

Kern was Player of the Game as Ohio State rallied from a 10-point deficit to score a resounding 27-16 victory.

The memory is so vivid. Jubilant Ohio State players in the raucous dressing room and their delirious fans outside were revelling in victory. Seemingly towering above everyone, a singular crimson and gold-clad player politely excused his way through the throng fronting the OSU locker room door. He walked into the bedlam, and once more silenced the Buckeyes.

"You are the best team I ever played against," O.J. told them magnanimously, shaking the hands of Woody and several players before unpretentiously exiting.

It has been 20 long years since the western sun set on that scene. No one would have dared suspected at the time, but it was the last blaze of glory for the Big Ten football conference.

The super sophs of Ohio State were unable to repeat their triumph, relinquishing their national title to Texas the next season and Nebraska as seniors.

Still, the 1968 Ohio State Buckeyes were a remarkable team, one that will certainly live forever in the memory of OSU fans. But also one that ranks as one of the truly great teams in college football history. And the last of the Big Ten's best. ★

The New York Giants are facing off against the San Francisco 49ers and it's time for a Sunday in front of the tube. But, on another channel, the Celtics and Lakers are getting set to start play in one of their classic mid-season matchups. Which do you watch? You don't want to miss a Magic Johnson behind-the-back pass to Worthy. Or a quick pitch to Roger Craig from Joe Montana for a long TD. And, you sure as heck don't want to switch from channel to channel. Sony has solved the problem of the ages with an all-new picture-within-a-picture television set; the **KV27-TX20** is a 27-inch, two-tuner model designed with the avid sports couch potato in mind. Now, with all of the crossover in seasons, you can watch two sports events simultaneously on this split-screen color TV. \$1500.



Remember when you were a kid and a brand-new pair of shiny white P.F. Flyers or U.S. Keds was about the niftiest present in the apparel category that your mom could put under the tree? Well, not much has changed, except you don't call them sneakers anymore. They said it couldn't be done, but New Balance has one-upped its competition with a series of all-everything athletic shoes that leaves the other hype-worn shoe makers in the dust. Basketball, tennis and running shoes in the **New Balance 1500 Series** are made with the consummate athlete in mind, containing as many as 16 different components in the midsole, super high-grade leather uppers, acceleration pads and balance stabilizers. Prices range from \$150 to \$160. Meanwhile, Avia has hit the slow track, tapping into the ever-popular walking market, with the first pair of—you guessed it—**Mall Walking** shoes. The Avia 310 has extra traction for those slick shopping mall floors so you walk and shop and never slip on your way to the latest sale. Priced at \$44.95.

Forget those overpriced fantasy camps that fuel your lost dreams and nothing else. Instead, give the gift that keeps on giving, and can best be described as a *reality* camp. Learn to drive the way the pros do at a high-performance road racing school. Got a new Porsche or Ferrari and want to know the best way to get the most out of it without killing yourself? These schools teach you how to handle fast cars at high speeds and in the worst and best conditions. On the West Coast, there's the **Driver's Connection** at the Willow Springs International Raceway (1½-hours drive north of Los Angeles); there are one- to four-day classes available at a cost of \$400 to \$1500. Or ask for the Deluxe Course. At the East Coast **Skip Barber Racing School** in Canaan, Connecticut, drive Formula Ford cars around a 1½-mile circuit at speeds up to 120 mph. It's priced at \$1500 for three days. There's also a school for advanced street driving, where the prices vary from \$400 to \$700.



Give friends a gift that will appreciate. But forget about real estate or pork futures. Instead, consider this: a 1958 Mickey Mantle baseball card goes for \$450 today; a 1969 Reggie Jackson or 1973 Mike Schmidt for \$300. Full sets from 1952, the first official year baseball cards appeared, are selling for \$20,000. **Topps Baseball Cards** has a variety of gift packs available through the mail or your nearest hobby shop. The Limited Edition Baseball Set with 792 cards on super high-gloss paper including a special team, manager and all-star cards sells for \$99.95. The Gallery of Champions are 12-card sets etched in various metals; the reproductions of real cards are available in aluminum (\$29.95), bronze (\$129.95), or silver (\$479), and are of 12 players who won the major league's top awards. They are also available as a regular set of cards for just \$25. Also available is the Traded Set of 132 players who were traded or called up during the season (\$11.95 to \$13.95).



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SPORT

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

WHAT TO
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SPORTS
NUT WHO'S
SEEN AND
PLAYED
EVERYTHING

BY RICHARD LEIVENBERG

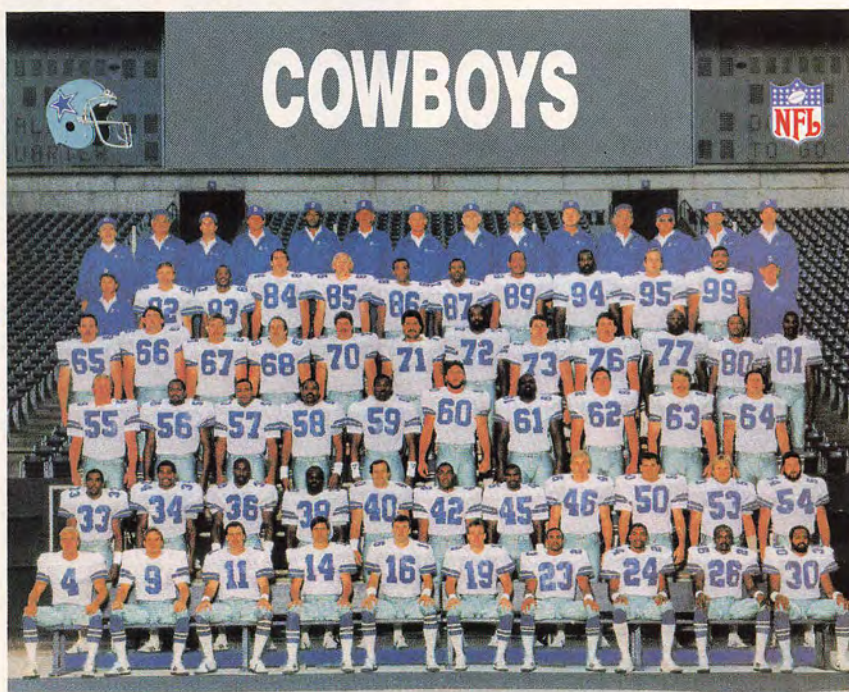
Larry Bird's fadeaway jumper vs. Michael Jordan's hanging spinshots. Who would win in a one-on-one? Find out with a computer video program from Electronic Arts called **Jordan vs. Bird: One-On-One**. Included are a one-on-one competition in which you can be either Bird or Jordan; an Air-Jordan Slam Dunk Contest; and a 3-point Shootout. Bird and Jordan helped to design this program which includes simulated fakes, jab steps, and all of their can't-miss sweetspots on the floor. IBM, Tandy & compatibles.

\$39.95.



If you can't play golf well, play at night. That way no one can see your swing. The perfect stocking stuffer for golfers is a set of **Nitelite Golf Balls**. Here's how they work: Bend the small chemical lightstick until it begins to glow, then insert it into the hole in the translucent plastic golf ball, designed specifically for night golf. The light lasts six hours and allows the ball to be seen for 225 yards. You can't lose it, unless it lands in water. (Sorry, no floatable balls yet.) With more than 3,500 night tournaments now, night golf is no fluke. Nitelite Golf Balls come packaged with one ball, two lightsticks and a lighted tee. Priced at \$6 a package. (Look for lighted putter from same company in 1989.)

No need to fool around with simulated video or computer games when the real thing is at hand. If you enjoy the prospect of butting heads with Pete Rozelle, the competition of America's game, the idea of spending summers in a sunny climate debating pro sports policy and law, making trades and testing the mettle of pro players while sitting in the best seat in the house, why not plunk down \$150 million and buy the **Dallas Cowboys**? The team is on the market, complete with cheerleaders. Help rebuild one of football's great dynasties. Who knows? You might discover another Staubach or Hayes.



DIAMOND CHALLENGE

SPORT QUIZ

Answer these 13 sports questions correctly and you could win the diamond football tie-tack pictured below. There will be two winners. In case of more than two perfect performances we will invoke the tiebreaker. Answers must be received by SPORT no later than December 18. The winner and tiebreaking entry (if necessary) will be announced in our February issue. Send answers to SPORT Magazine, P.O. Box 79, Los Angeles, California 90078.

1 Franco Harris corrals a tipped pass from Terry Bradshaw and sprints toward pay dirt with the "Immaculate Reception" that gave Pittsburgh a stunning, last-minute victory over Oakland in a 1972 AFC playoff game. Who was the pass originally intended for?

2 Only two Caucasian running backs have won the NFL rushing title in the last 15 years. Who are they?

3 Name the first horse to win more than \$2 million on the race track.

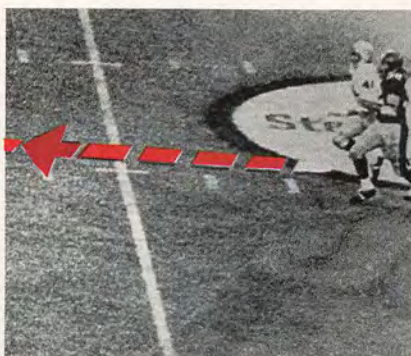
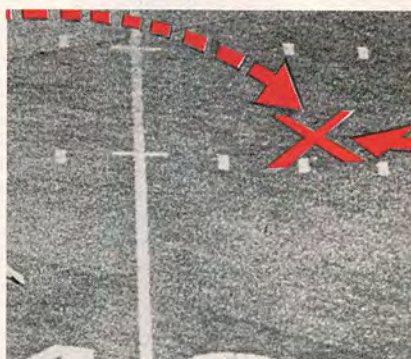
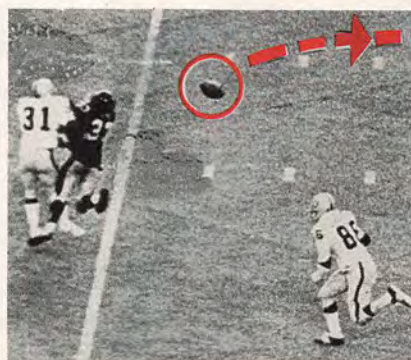
- A. Affirmed
- B. Seattle Slew
- C. Ruffian
- D. Bill Shoemaker

4 Only two players in the NFL have played in conference title games during the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Name them.

5 Kareem Abdul-Jabbar starred in three motion pictures. Name them.

6 "Taking aim at the second green on my second shot, 255 yards from the pin on the par-5 of 527 yards, I hit the first double eagle in U.S. Open history." Who am I?

- A. Mickey Wright
- B. Jack Nicklaus
- C. Arnold Palmer
- D. Tze-Chung Chen



7 *Philadelphia Freedom*, a song written and recorded by Elton John, was dedicated to which athlete?

- A. Billie Jean King
- B. Mike Schmidt
- C. Chris Evert
- D. Julius Erving

8 Angelo Dundee has trained nine boxing champions, including Sugar Ray Leonard and Muhammad Ali. Name the remaining champions.

9 Only two NBA players have won both the MVP and Rookie of the Year award in the same season. Name this dynamic duo.

10 Who is the only woman to finish in the top 10 in the Indy 500?

11 What team challenged Milwaukee in the 1969 coin flip for the draft rights to Lew Alcindor?

- A. Houston
- B. Philadelphia
- C. Phoenix
- D. Portland

12 True or False: If an NBA player is injured on a foul and is unable to attempt his free throw and has to leave the game, he cannot re-enter the game under any circumstances.

13 Match the boxer's given name with his nickname.

- A. Joe Walcott . . . Cincinnati Cobra
- B. Ezzard Charles . . . Old Mongoose
- C. Archie Moore . . . Stonefist
- D. Roberto Duran . . . Barbados Demon

—William Ladson, Raymond Harper

TIEBREAKER

Stump us with a question about sports. Make it clever. Questions will be evaluated on their difficulty and creativity. Two winners will be chosen. Only stumpers from those contestants who have compiled a perfect score on the other 13 questions will be considered. The winning stumpers will appear in a subsequent Quiz.

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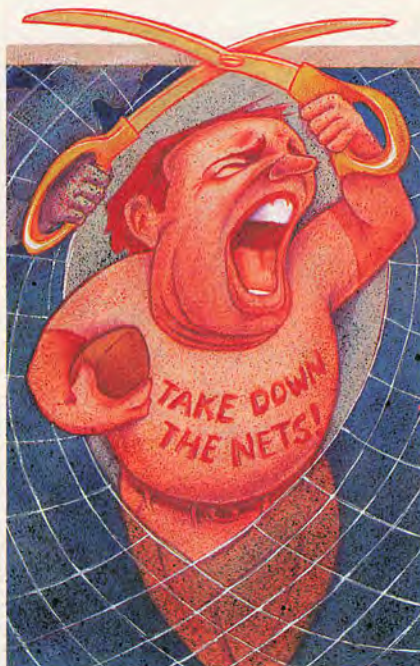
SPORT SCOPE

BUT LET'S LEAVE THOSE BACKSTOPS UP

"You can catch a baseball, you can catch a puck. But when it comes to football, you're out of luck." So goes the first verse of a rap song by the National Fan Alliance, a crusading group with the motto, "Take Down The Nets." In its second year of pigskin activism, the NFA is appealing to the National Football League to abolish the nets behind the goalposts and allow fans to keep footballs that get kicked or thrown into the stands.

"Players are making \$400,000 a year, owners are making millions of dollars a year and then there's that disgruntled look on the fans' face—who've admittedly paid for the worst seats in the place—being deprived of the opportunity to catch a \$39.95 product," says Steven David, a 42-year-old self-employed promotions man who founded the NFA in Orange County, California. David's first move was to fire off an open letter to NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle, pleading his case for "The Fans" and suggesting alternatives.

Jim Heffernan, the NFL's Director of Public Relations, says the nets are in



CHRIS ROBERTSON

place for safety reasons. "If you kick a ball into the stands," he says, "you'd have people fighting all over."

To which David responds: "They say they're looking out for our safety—as

they sell 20-ounce cups of beer to 50,000 people at 14 cities around the country and then put them on the free-way." Heffernan, who had never heard of the NFA, says, "I see no way that we'd give into their wishes." That hasn't stopped David from taking on the NFL goliath. The NFA headquarters are in the offices of a Southern California compact disc company, which also provides the organization with an 800 number (800-225-8513). David says the group has "about 250 members" across the country. They pay \$20 a year (the NFA accepts four major credit cards) and receive an NFA T-shirt or baseball cap, a copy of the rap song on disc or cassette, along with a copy of the letter to Rozelle and an 8½x11 poster that says, naturally, "Take Down The Nets."

David, who has poster-carrying brigands in seven NFL cities, has had his banner confiscated—and later returned—at Los Angeles Raiders and Rams and San Diego Chargers games. There is progress, however. The Rams and Chargers now allow fans to keep the footballs that sail over or wide of the nets. "We've made some definite inroads," David says. —Steve Rosenbloom

TEN THINGS YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

It's called Australian Rules Football and, indeed, there are rules, even if this mixture of Gaelic football and rugby that you see on ESPN appears to have as much structure as a student demonstration in Southeast Asia.

- The ball is oval and so are the playing fields (called grounds), which might be 120 yards at each end and 170 yards in the middle, and could be 150 to 200 yards long.

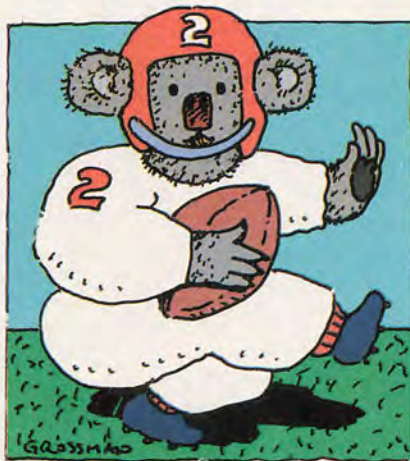
- Teams consist of 18 players and only two reserves. The squad includes three ruckmen (derived from English rugby), who follow play all over the field and usually are the best players.

- Games are 100 minutes, divided into 25-minute quarters. And, barring injury, players are 100-minute performers. No pass-rushing specialists, no nickel backs, and no timeouts.

- There are four goal posts at each

end, two taller ones flanked by shorter ones. A goal (six points) is scored when the ball is kicked through the tall posts without being touched; a "behind" (one point) is scored when the ball is kicked between a tall post and a short one.

- Players advance the ball with punts and hand passes (punching the ball with



MYRON GROSSMAN

a fist). Players can run with the ball, but have to bounce it or touch it to the ground at least once every 15 meters.

- Players can be tackled only between the knees and shoulders.

- Players wear little if any protective padding. No helmets, no girdle pads, no flak jackets.

- Most players are semi-professionals, earning their livings in outside occupations. Stars are better paid. Previously, the Victorian Football League had a wage scale that was based on seniority, not ability.

- Australia's most popular league, the 14-team Victorian Football League (founded in 1897), is based in Melbourne, with 11 of the teams situated in the geographically small state of Victoria.

- Every year, teams from the Australian states and territories play in the State of Origin tournament. No matter their professional affiliation, players return to compete for their home state's team.

—Stig Jantz

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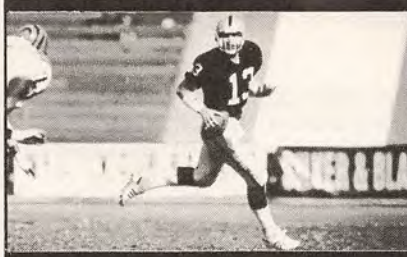
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SPORT SCOPE

DO THE PEOPLE IN SEATTLE FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT THE PILOTS?

Duke. Pee Wee. The People's Cherce. The Dodgers no longer are in Brooklyn. Haven't been for 30 years, since Walter O'Malley took the franchise to Los Angeles and left the faithful in a state of perpetual mourning. And Ebbets Field has been replaced by a housing project. But Brooklyn Dodger fans still love Dem Bums. Mickey Owen dropping the third strike still causes a grimace, while Johnny Podres' victory over the hated Yankees in the 1955 World Series brings a sense of *raison d'être*.

The loyalty of nostalgic—manic?—Dodger lovers has kept alive the scores of memories of Brooklyn's erstwhile heroes. There's the Brooklyn Dodger Restaurant featuring old photos and even appearances by favorites such as Duke Snider and Clem Labine. Autograph shows and trivia contests have tremendous turnouts of old ballplayers and fans. There even is a monthly *Brooklyn Bums Newsletter*, which never misses a



AP/WIDEWORLD

chance to take a shot at O'Malley. And in March, 1989, the Brooklyn Historical Society will open a baseball exhibit that will provide a permanent home for the Brooklyn Dodger Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame started out in 1984 "as a project to teach the students of the Jackie Robinson School in Brooklyn about Robinson and his accomplishments," says Marty Adler, the assistant principal in charge and founder of the Hall. Babe Herman was moved to tears when he was inducted in 1985. Sal Maglie came just to be part of it. Ceremonies also have included The Dodger Sym-

Phony, an Ebbets Field musical staple comprised of "crazy old men running around smoking the same smelly cigars they had in 1939," says Adler.

As the memorabilia piles up, the loathing pales. "Among those people of my generation," Adler says, "there's no longer any hatred, but (there is) the bitterness and a sense of abandonment. I'd be lying if I said anything else. They took the soul out of the borough." The Brooklyn Dodger Hall of Fame will try to restore some of that soul—but don't expect to find a bust of O'Malley there.

—Stuart Miller

DIDN'T YOU USED TO BE... ARCHIE GRIFFIN?

He came out of Ohio State as the only player to win two Heisman Trophies. Much was expected. Little was delivered. After becoming the Cincinnati Bengals' first-round draft pick in 1976, Archie Griffin's National Football League accomplishments fell miles short of the 5,177 yards he amassed as a Buckeye. Few people would disagree that Griffin's NFL career was a disappointment. However, Griffin is one of those few.

"I disagree that I had a disappointing career in pro football," says Griffin, who rushed for 100 yards in a game three times (that's 72 fewer than Walter Payton, who never won even one Heisman). "I averaged four yards per carry. People measure running backs by the 1,000 yards per season, even though that's not accurate all the time. You've got to consider the number of times the person carried the ball to get those yards."

The three-time All-American averaged seven carries a game from 1976 to

1982 (he was injured in '83, wasn't offered a contract in '84, and played one season in the defunct United States Football League in 1985). Griffin rushed for 2,808 yards in his NFL career, which is 13,918 short of Payton's NFL mark.

Griffin never carried the ball more than 140 times a season, which he says was a result of Cincinnati's passing emphasis. "They didn't adjust to me," Griffin says. "I had to adjust to them." Griffin proved he could adjust, catching 43 passes for 417 yards, to go along with 688 yards rushing in 1979. He averaged 8.4 yards per catch in his career, finishing with 1,607 yards, which still won't get him enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio.

Griffin didn't have much more success off the field. A family-owned shoe business called Athlete's Foot went bankrupt, with an estimated \$200,000 in losses. That seems like tip money these days, but remember that Griffin was making only \$80,000 a year in his NFL career.

Griffin, however, bounced back. He is the assistant athletic director at Ohio State, a fund-raising position he has held since 1986. Griffin's goal is to be an ath-

letic director, an achievement that seems more likely than his induction into Canton, no matter how many yards per carry he averaged. "I didn't break any records," Griffin says, "but I feel that if you have an average of four yards per carry, you did a pretty doggone good job. I'm very happy with what I did in pro football."

—William Ladson

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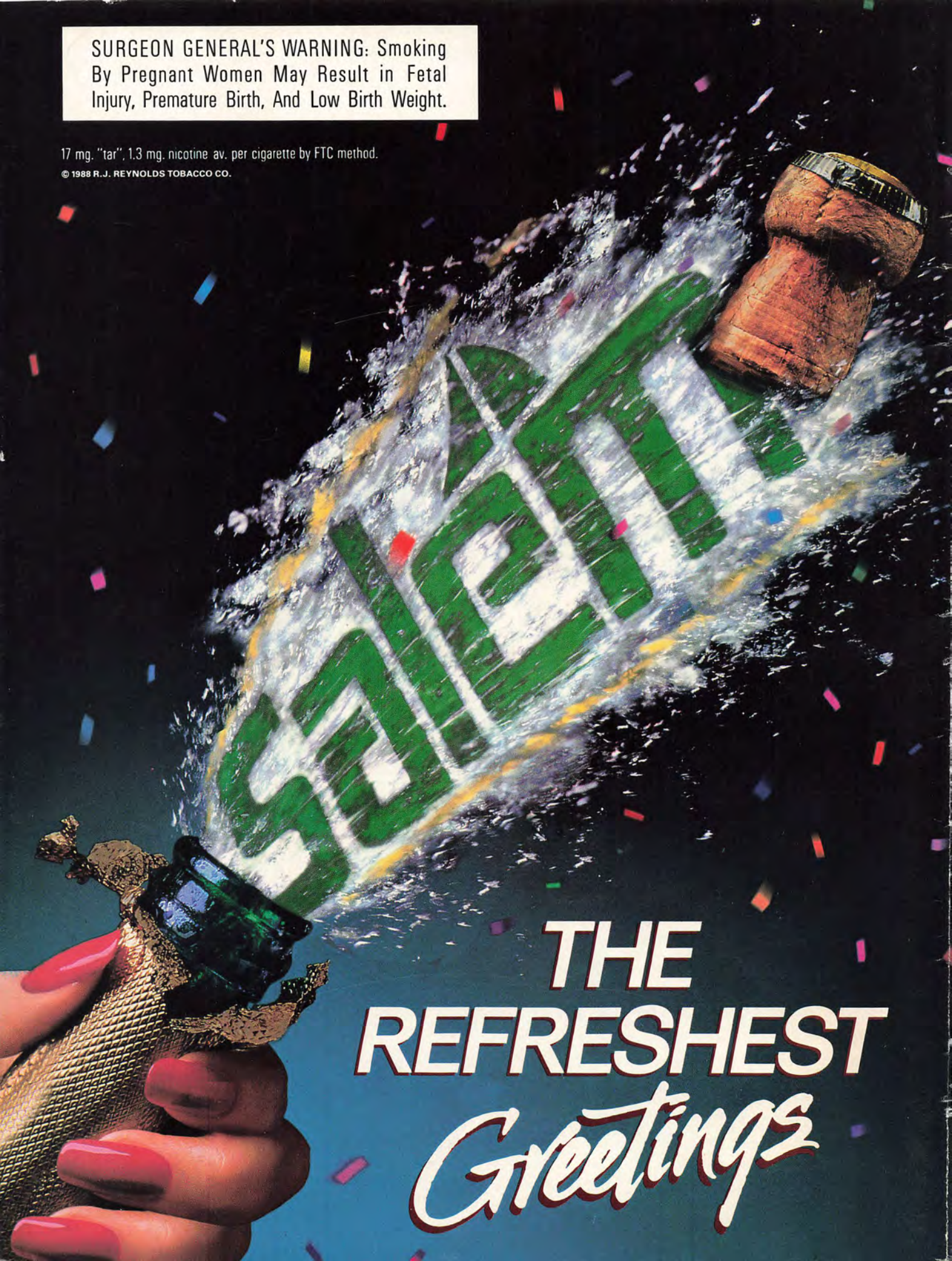
A full-page photograph of three soldiers in camouflage uniforms rappelling down a dark, craggy rock face. They are positioned vertically, with the top soldier at the top, the middle soldier in the center, and the bottom soldier at the bottom. They are all holding ropes and appear to be in motion. The background is a clear, bright blue sky.

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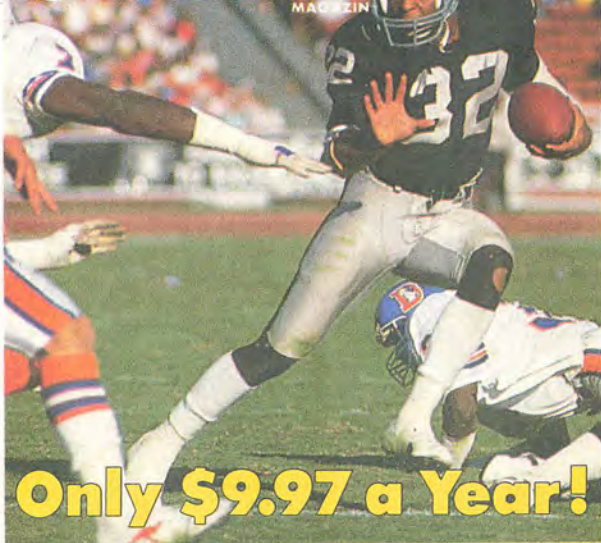
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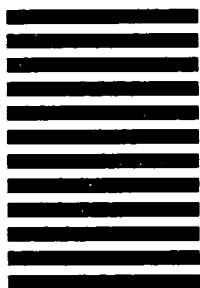
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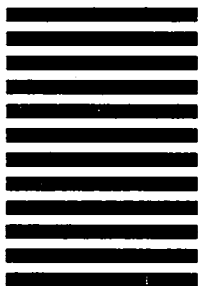
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